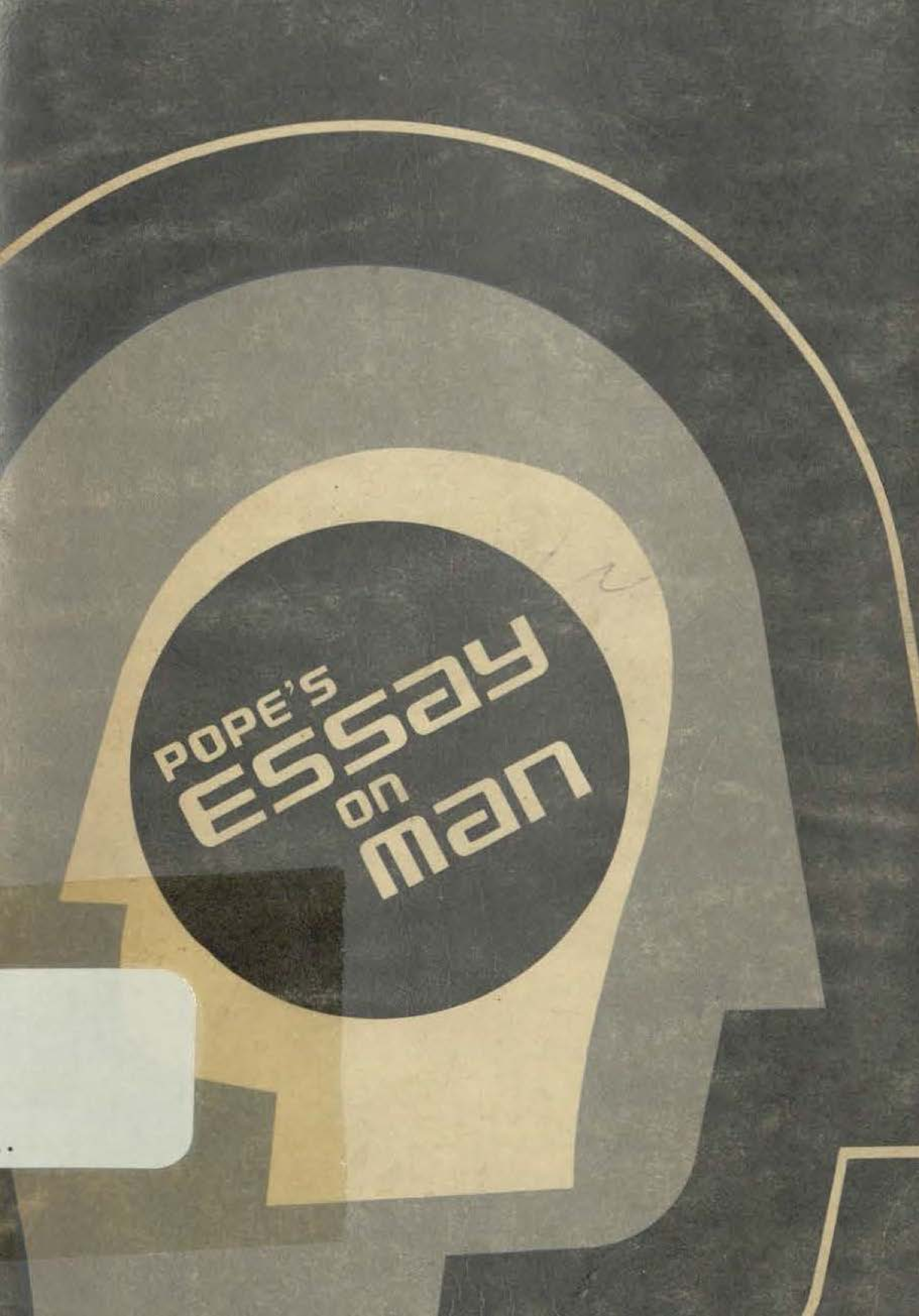

POPE'S
ESSAY
ON
MAN

POPE
ESSAY ON MAN

Containing :

General Introduction, Text, Paraphrase, Notes, Questions & Answers

by

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INTRODUCTION

ALEXANDER POPE (May, 1688 to May, 1744)

A Short History of the Times

Alexander Pope was born on May 21, 1688, the year of the Glorius Revolution in England. A brief review of the history of the period is, therefore, necessary in order to understand correctly the condition of the times, and the outlook that the age gave to man.

James II's Catholic sympathies were much too pronounced. He freely gave employment to Catholics in spite of the legal barrier that the Test Act of 1673 provided. To secure his hold over the church, he illegally set up a new Court of Ecclesiastical Commission with Jeffreys at its head. This commission suspended Compton, the Bishop of London, and then attacked the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The Vice-chancellor of Cambridge was deprived of his office for not granting the degree of M. A. to a Benedictine monk, which he could not legally do. The Commission deprived all fellows of their offices for not agreeing to accept the King's nominee as the Vice-chancellor. Thus the King not only alienated the sympathies of the English church but antagonised the Universities as well.

The King, then, issued the declaration of Indulgence suspending penal statutes against both the Roman Catholic and Protestant non-conformists. His object, thereby, was to favour the Roman Catholics who were in negligible minority. So by this step he failed to please either of the parties.

A son was born to James II on June 10, but unwisely enough, he did not allow any of the Protestants to be present in the palace. Hence a rumour went abroad that the child did not really belong to the Queen, but was brought into the palace in a warming pan. The King

had no proof to refute it, he simply expressed bitterly his resentment.

But he did not have the army with him. So the popular leaders met together, and a letter signed by Whig and Tory leaders was sent to William of Orange asking him to come over with an army and secure liberties of the people. William did respond to the call of the people. He came with an army, and in the battle that followed, all the friends of James deserted him. James fled in disguise to France, and William had no difficulty in securing the reins of the Government. That is how the Glorious Revolution took place, and William and Mary became the King and Queen of England. The greatest effect of the Revolution was the establishmentof constitutional monarchy in England. The liberties of the people were secured once and for all, and the will of the Parliament became supreme.

Birth of Pope

It is against this political background that Alexander Pope was born on May 21, 1688. The air he inhaled was not of peace and plenty, but of insecurity on all sides.

His Life and Works

His father was a linen merchant who carried on business in Lombard Street. This was a street which had closer association with banks than with the Goddess of Poetry. In *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, Pope himself tells us of the gentility of his blood :

"Of gentle blood (part shed in honour's cause
While yet in Britain honour had applause)
Each parent sprung".

Trade was not looked upon as a respectable profession during those days. But his father gathered some money within a few years, retired from business and bought a country-house, near Windsor Forest, at Binfield. So that from his earliest years, Pope had opportunities of being familiar with the rural scenery of Windsor Forest.

Pope's Early Education

Being the son of Catholic parents, Pope did not get

an opportunity of going to a public school, and so he never got the drilling in classical languages available therein. Pope taught himself to write by copying print, and throughout his life his fine and graceful handwriting reminded people of his early training. His early education Pope received from a priest. His father had given shelter to this priest in his own house, and the grateful priest repaid the kindness by teaching the little boy the rudiments of Latin and Greek. Later, young Pope was sent to two schools by turn, but both of them being Catholic they were in a very bad state, and were far from satisfactory. His school-days were practically over by the time he reached the twelfth year, and then began his attempt at self-education. He took to reading by himself with very great eagerness and enthusiasm, specially for poetry. But, no doubt, his knowledge of Greek and Latin was not considerable. Voltaire, who knew Pope personally, declared at one place that he could hardly read or speak a word of French. Pope's knowledge of Italian also was limited. Thus Pope did not grow up to be a scholar in the strict sense of the term.

His Sickness and Physical Disability

Pope's growth in boyhood was retarded by a severe illness. He remained almost a dwarf, and so deformed that his after-life was "one long disease" which not only precluded him from the possibility of embracing any active profession, but made constant care and nursing necessary for the preservation of his life. Like many other deformed persons, he had a face which was singularly intellectual and expressive, and his eyes were remarkable for their tenderness and fire.

It was difficult to say whether his sickness was a curse or boon to him, for, as some people believe, without this disease, Pope would have taken up some other career, and would not have been able to devote undivided attention to the muse of poetry, as he did actually.

He suffered throughout his life practically from illness. Headache was his constant companion. It was but

natural, therefore, that he should have suffered from a kind of nervous irritability. He saw others run and jump and play on the ground, and felt envious of those active friends of his. An under-current of unhappiness pricked him all through because he was deprived of many of those joys of life which every youth craved for. Unable to engage in the sports of boyhood, he showed poetical talent at a very early age. He wrote :

"Why did I write ? What sin to me unknown
Dipt me in my ink—my parents' or my own ?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame
I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came."

... ...

"The muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life."

Poor man ! in spite of his eminence, he always remained a victim of many diseases . He had frequent attacks of Asthma, too ; at a later stage, dropsy was added to the list of his diseases.

His Personal Life and Views

That is one of the reasons why Pope never married. After his father's death, the poet stayed with his mother at a villa which he purchased at Twickenham, situated above London at a distance of twenty miles. This villa he called his favourite retreat, and there he passed his leisure hours in gardening which he called the "purest of human pleasures". He had got prepared for himself a grotto in the villa—which in due course was visited by the greatest men of the times in all fields of life. This retirement was possible because of the great financial success that his translation of *Iliad* brought him.

Two small poets and critics of the previous generation, whose acquaintance Pope made about this time, did something to turn the bent of his mind. They were Granville and Walsh. Walsh, particularly, advised him to make it his study and aim to be "correct." Walsh somehow or other felt that there had been great poets, but they had been all disorderly and unwilling to put their

pens under law. The poet's freedom had, therefore, degenerated into licence and a remedy must be sought in order. Pope readily accepted this view—and he expressed it in detail in his *Essay on Criticism* (1711).

Pope's Later Life and His Works

Pope's father was in easy circumstances ; and thus the boy was able to indulge that taste for study and poetical reading which continued to be the passion of his life. He was so struck with reverence for Dryden's name that at the age of 12, he is said to have persuaded a friend to accompany him to Will's Coffee House which the illustrious veteran frequented. Thus he managed to get a glimpse of the patriarch of letters whose mantle he himself was destined to wear. Dryden died in 1700, and Pope translated the first book of Statius' *Thebais* in 1702-3, and a number of *Pastorals* in 1704. About the same time, he made certain paraphrases of Chaucer. In 1705, he met Wycherley, and this famous but ill-assorted friendship of the old and young poets lasted, with considerable heart-burnings on either side, till Wycherley's death in 1715. Another early friend of Pope was Walsh who was a bigger critic than a poet. His influence and advice had much to do in the formation of Pope's style. He received a fine tribute of praise in the *Essay on Criticism* which Pope published in 1711. This was the first poem to secure real fame for Pope, and it gave a foretaste of his immense popularity.

It is a perceptive poem in antithetic heroic couplets on the canons of literary taste and style, according to the classical rules of Aristotle and Quintilian, and the classical models of Homer and Virgil. Possibly, it was influenced by Horace's *Art Poetica*, Vida's *De Arte Poetica* and Boileau's *L' Art Poetique*. But Pope expressed others' theories with such a union of force and delicacy, such ripeness of judgment, such a grace and melody, that the poem appears less like the attempt of a young writer than the result of consummate experience and practice in composition. One body of opinion depreciates its goaded antithesis and aphoristic platitudes and the other

exalts its declamatory power and gnomic wit ; both groups agree upon its economical condensation, structural excellence, its interpretation of essential neo-classical tastes and standards.

This is closely followed by the first sketch of *The Rape of the Lock* which appeared in two Cantos in Lintot's Miscellany for 1712.

This tiny mock-heroic poem was atonce greeted by Addison as excellent, but Pope set himself to still further improvement of it, and the whole poem was published in 1714. Between 1712 and 1715, a number of Pastorals had been published—*The Messiah*, *Windsor Forest*—extraordinary for their neatness of versification and beauty of diction. But *The Rape of the Lock* was his longest poem of the period. It is perhaps the finest mock-heroic poem in the English Language.

The subject of Pope's inimitable poem, *The Rape of the Lock* was the cavalier frolic of Lord Petre, a man of fashion at the court of Queen Anne. He cut a lock of hair from the head of a beautiful and young maid of honour called Arabella Fermor. This incident was reported to Pope by his friend John Caryll, and was treated by him with so much grace and delicate mock-heroic pleasantry that, when he consulted Addison on the first sketch of the poem, the great critic advised Pope not to alter a single line, for any change might spoil the beauty of the "delicious little thing" as he called it.

Addison's advice was really prudent and sincere. But Pope followed his own judgment and incorporated in the poem the supernatural agency of Sylphs and Gnomes. The action of these miniature spirits, in exquisite proportion to the frivolous persons and events of the poem, is intended to fill the place of the classical deities who, from Homer downwards, have favoured or opposed the heroes of epic poetry.

The Rape of the Lock, thus, is a dwarf epic in five books, and to the lofty and serious works which it follows in miniature, is "as a Dresden China figure to a Venus or

an Apollo. It sparkles with flash of diamonds and roguish glances ; it is all a-flutter with hoop-petticoats ; it has the trifling stateliness of stiff brocades and powdered wigs."

In this poem, Pope showed much acquaintance with the fashionable world of his times. Among his friends, near Binfield, was an ancient Roman Catholic family. In this family, there were two daughters, Teresa and Martha, the latter two years younger than Pope. The poet seems to have owed many of his acquaintances to them, and though he quarrelled with Teresa, Martha remained his friend throughout life. A friendship with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, a leader of society and a woman of letters, had a less fortunate issue. The two were close friends from 1717, but some six years later they quarrelled, and from then onwards "Sappho" as he called Lady Mary, was the object of his malignant satire.

The poem partly achieved the purpose for which it was written. It allayed the fears on both sides, and patched up a truce between the two quarrelling families. It is, thus, a social satire modelled after Boileau's *Le Lutrin* and Vida's *The Game of Chess*. Its unity of structure is better than those of many of his later poems. It is characterised by humorous bathos, airy fancy, good-natured raillery, razor-edged versification. Introduction of the supernatural (Sylphs and Gnomes) made the poem delightfully effective despite Addison's fear that it might mar the work.

Hazlitt calls this poem "The Triumph of Insignificance". De Quincey says : "It is the most exquisite monument of playful fancy that universal literature offers"

In 1713 was published *Windsor Forest.* Its extraordinary neatness of versification and beauty of diction must be taken into account, if we compare it with the work of other and more natural poets. The plan of the poem is borrowed from Sir John Denham's *Cooper's Hill.* The book was received with mixed feelings. Men like John Dennis criticised it very hard, but from many others, it received undiscriminating praise.

In 1715 the first volume of his translation of the *Iliad* was published. It was a huge task, and was completed with no small difficulty in 1720 in six volumes. The whole work was dedicated to Congreve. From the point of view of monetary income, this was the most successful venture. Pope received over £ 5000, and laid the foundation of that competence which he enjoyed later with sense and moderation. The translation of *Odyssey* came in 1725.

In 1717 Pope published a volume of Collected Poems containing *The Lines to an Unfortunate Lady*, *Epistle from Sappho to Phaon* and *Epistle from Heloisa to Abelard.* The subjects were taken from the romantic stories of medieval times. These works are artificial in their diction and arrangement alike ; but the passion which they express is so intense and so vivid with beautiful and pathetic imagery that they are considered as masterpieces by some.

The Dunciad: The first edition of it came in May, 1728, the second in March, 1729 ; a fourth book was added to it in 1742, and the entire satire came out in final form in 1743. To chastise one's enemies, specially if they are weaker than oneself, is not a noble pastime ; but Pope was constitutionally sensitive. His early success, his steady popularity, his malignant vanity, and, above all, his supercilious tone in which he thought fit to speak of the struggles of literary existence and its social inferiority, all conspired to raise round him a swarm of industrious enemies, animated alike by envy and revenge. Consequently, he determined to inflict upon them, under the mask of zeal for reason and good taste, a memorable castigation. *The Dunciad* is, thus, more remarkable for its spite than for its taste or reason. It is a personal lampoon and a general satire on literary hacks. But this fault, which ought to have been its ruin, has procured, by a curious inversion of taste, its real and abiding fame.

The main idea of the *Dunciad* was really suggested by Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe* whose faults and merits it shares on a large scale. But it is incomparably the fiercest, most sweeping and most powerful of literary satires. Most of

the persons mentioned in the poem are obscure, and have sunk into oblivion. But in the later part of the poem, Pope has given a sketch of the gradual decline and corruption of taste and learning in Europe, which is one of the noblest outbursts of his genius.

The plot of the poem—*The Iliad of the Dunces*—is not very ingenious ; it is borrowed from Dryden. The idea is that the throne of dulness is left vacant by the death of Laurence Eusden, and that the various aspirants to that "bad eminence" engage in a series of trials, like the olympic games of old, to determine who shall inherit it. In this original poem, the palm was given to Theobald whose strictures on Pope's Shakespeare had suggested the completion of the satire. But in the later edition, Theobald is degraded from the throne, and the crown is given to Colley Cibber, the famous actor, manager and dramatic critic. Whatever might have been Cibber's vices or weaknesses, he was in no way a king of dunces.

The Dunciad, thus, is a wonderful and also a fearful example of the highest genius applied to the most selfish ends—self-love chastising its victims with the lightning of genius under the guise of punishing bad literature.

But its universal fame lies in its general application to dulness under all its shapes and forms. This aspect makes us forget for a while that it was originally intended for wreaking a private grudge. On one hand, it has brilliant versification and diction, clever irony, spicy satire, appropriately hewn grotesque images ; on the other, it suffers from broad burlesque, indecent abuse, mean-spirited invective.

Imitations of Horace—Published about 1739, is a group of pungent satires portraying contemporary characters and manners, in imitation of Horace. It reveals Pope's brilliant, concise style, and conveys his satirical, moral and political sentiments.

Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot (1735) is a brilliant, venomous, autobiographical prologue to *Imitations of Horace*. In it, the dialogue between Pope and his friend-physician

superbly castigates some of Pope's enemies, including Addison and Lord Harvey. *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* contains some of his most biting satire—half philosophical (1735).

Essay on Man (1735)

This philosophical tone is found with undivided authority in the final edition of Pope's *Essay on Man.* It is an ethical and metaphysical poem consisting of four epistles addressed to Bolingbroke. In fact, it is really a poetical version of a metaphysical system which Bolingbroke himself had planned. The originality of the theory, therefore, is not remarkable and its soundness even may be doubted. The treatment of the theme is somewhat diffuse and appears unwieldy. And as a contribution to the literature of philosophy, it is not very important.

But no one can deny the exquisite neatness and conciseness of the verses, its unvarying melody, and the beauty and the felicity of the illustrations. *The Essay on Man* is an excellent example of the highest skill in the art of so treating an abstract and philosophical subject as to render it neither dry nor unpoetical. In short, its construction is this :

In the first epistle, man is regarded in his relation to the universe ; in the second, in his relation to himself ; in the third, in his relation to society ; and in the fourth, with respect to his idea of, and pursuit after, happiness.

It is addressed to Lord Bolingbroke whose shallow deism influenced Pope very much. It tries to "vindicate the ways of God to Man" for "whatever is, is right." It thus presents the complacent philosophy of the eighteenth century. It is not a conceptual poem ; its erudition is only superficial and half digested, its argument dogmatic and unsustained. Its metrical dexterity and borrowed comfortable precepts take the form of such brilliant epigrams that the work of no other author except Shakespeare is so fertile a source for memorable quotations.

The Closing Years of Pope

Pope's last work of real importance was the *Essay on*

Man. During the final years of his life, he kept on adding to his satires, completing *The Imitations of Horace*, for example. His later satires display the same brilliancy as of old, but, of course. their tone is monotonous. In his *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, he was bold enough to try his strength with Dryden, but was defeated, though without disgrace.

Pope also wrote a number of epitaphs some of which are remarkable instances of his consummate skill in the art of paying compliments. And it may be said of Pope, as Macaulay said of Voltaire, that "no man paid compliments better than he did." "His sweetest confectionery had always a delicate yet stimulating flavour which was delightful to palates wearied by the coarse preparations of inferior artists. *The Rape of the Lock*, *The Epistles* and even the *Satires* abound in examples of the most artful and ingenious flattery, often veiled with great subtlety under the air of blame.

The Death of Pope

Many causes, external and internal, threw a gloom over Pope's declining years. The death of his mother whom he loved dearly, and who looked after him so well, the loss of many friends among whom Swift was one, the increased complications of his own maladies—all these brought his life to an end. On 30th of May, 1744, died Pope, unquestionably the most illustrious writer of his age.

Pope as a Man

As a man, Pope was a strange mixture of selfishness and ganerosity, malignity and tolerance. He had a peculiar tendency which led him into indirect and cunning courses. And his inordinate literary ambition kept him, like Voltaire, in a state of incessant literary fever. It is under the effect of this fever that he occasionally showed meanness and petty jealousies in private and public life. But as a writer, he is definitely above all others of his time, and the age to which he belonged was justly called the Age of Pope.

The Age of Pope

The literary period inaugurated by Dryden and the great wits of the Glorious Revolution (1688) reached its climax in the reign of Queen Anne—the so-called Augustan age of English literature. The classical spirit ruled supreme in Verse and Prose alike, and produced a degree of polish in both, which, in inferior hands, became dangerously like a mere mechanical regularity. It was an age pre-eminently of literary cliques, of great patrons and clients of genius. Its tendency was unimaginative and matter-of-fact; its literature deals not with ideas, but with men and things—and, above all, politics. It studies not so much what it says as the way to say it. This is the spirit that came in like a flood with Dryden; and, as he dominated his own age, so the epoch in which his work was carried to perfection has its own laureate. Far above all other poets of this epoch shines the brilliant name of Alexander Pope.

As despotism was evicted, *politically* the age was content to accept Whig oligarchy in which factious contended for place. Walpole maintained peace and material prosperity till he fell before a flame of war fanned by his opponents. Chatham was victorious over France and Spain, and the attempt of George III to restore personal rule was foiled through his ruin of his American policy. Political principle was revived by Chatham, Burke and Rockingham, and upheld by younger Pitt, a disciple of Adam Smith, the philosopher-economist. Government by party began to supplant faction, and the reform of Parliament was balked only by the reaction due to the French Revolution, when Pitt was dragged into war against a propagandist religion in arms.

Intellectually, the rationalism rising naturally from the principles of Locke found early expression in the writings of Collins, Tindal and others, and was associated with Toryism by Bolingbroke and then Hume. Locke's own doctrine, accepting Christianity, was maintained by the Whig divines. Against both Schools stood the High-churchmen many of whom were Jacobites. They all

upheld the authority of the clergy. In all these Schools logical and historical argument was usually of more account than spiritual life.

In *Science*, the genius of Newton had opened the road to new discoveries in Mathematics and Astronomy; Henry Cavendish led the way in *Chemistry and Physics*. In classical science, Bentley showed himself the greatest of scholars, but after his death, the Universities sank into intellectual torpor. In *Economics* the greatest event was the publication of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. In *Applied Science*, the latter half of the century saw the invention of the spinning jenny and the mule, while the restoration of the roads and the making of canals led to the development of collieries, potteries and weaving.

Authorship was still no path to wealth. All parties united to buy Pope's *Homer*, and all his works had a market, but, to tell the truth, few writers made a living. The age of patronage was ending, and the reading public was yet small. A few country towns only had literary circles. Some country gentlemen bought books; some clergymen collected apologetic divinity. Goldsmith got only £ 40 for *The Traveller*, and £ 60 only for *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Dr Johnson got £ 400 in all for his *Lives of the Poets*. Few playwrights earned much. Gay had £ 700 for *The Beggars Opera*, and Goldsmith about £ 500 for his great *Comedies*. But good painters did well, and music was in fashion.

For travelling, none but the main roads were easy, at least in winter. The family coach was giving way to post-chaise for common men, and the whisky or gig for top class people. For cheaper way-faring, there was the stage-coach getting speedier, and the wagon which took goods as well as humble passengers. But it was very slow.

There was little change in education in theory, though Oxford and Cambridge were really improving. The training was based on Latin and Greek. Westminster and Eton were the fashionable Schools. In the towns, the small Grammar Schools taught the sons of the

clergy and the lesser gentry and the tradesmen ; poor boys also got some education through them. The peasantry were often not removed from serfdom, and mostly restricted to the parish of their birth.

Police arrangement in the country was definitely bad ; highway robberies were very common, and the criminal was merciless. Death-penalty was frequent, and was often enforced for petty offences. The prisons and madhouses had been places of horror before, but they improved much towards the end of the century through the efforts of Howard. Many healthy reforms were brought about in jails and in lunatic asylums.

The Coffee House and its influence on Life and Letters

As has already been said, Pope represented many important tendencies of his age. He reflected the hard brilliance, the facile optimism of his age in much the same way as Tennyson represented the religious perplexities and social ideals of the Victorion England, and Addison and Thackeray the fashions, tastes and follies of their respective ages.

A new literary class grew at about this time. Literary man of the preciding age depended very much for their livelihood upon a patron. That patronage still existed during the age of Pope. It is said that Pope made his fortune by "a kind of joint stock patronage" where the aristocratic patron induced other friends of his to subscribe towards the maintenance of important literary men.

But this system underwent a change. A poet or a pamphleteer would now attach himself to an influential minister, and use his literary powers in support of that gentleman's cause. But soon as the minister found that man's powers exhausted—or not to his advantage, he would shake him off, and take to another perhaps cheaper and more convenient one. Thus literary men's fortunes were always fluctuating. They hardly afforded to displease their patrons—and thus were obliged at times to hide the truth.

Clubs and coffee-houses were the main meeting places of these literary men. Highly fashionable and exalted people would indulge in gambling and card-playing, and lose hundreds of pounds per hour. But less exalted people would assemble in some of the numerous coffee-houses—where tea, coffee, chocolate could be drunk, picquet and basset played, best of literary and political conversation could be had, and where the host could retail the latest gossip of the town, and introduce his clients to samples of the latest fashion in coiffure and the latest craze in walking-sticks. The coffee-houses, which were at the zenith of popularity in the reign of Anne, speedily became identified with particular professions and with different political parties. Addison wrote in his Spectator No. 1 :

"There is no place of general resort wherein I do not often make my appearance ; sometimes I am seen thrusting my head into a round of politicians at Will's, and listening with great attention to the narratives that are made in those little circular audiences ; sometimes I smoke a pipe at Child's, and while I seem attentive to nothing but the pot-man, overhear the conversation of every table in the room."

It is clear from descriptions such as these that politicians, lawyers, clergymen, literary men met at these places and discussed the problems of the hour. Thus the author and his public were forced into intimate proximity through these coffee-houses. If a man admired writings, he would naturally hasten to his coffee-house where he might hear his favourite holding forth to his own favourite friends. Thus the circle of discipleship grew wider gradually.

Tea, of course, was an expensive luxury ; coffee was a more common drink. Pope refers to tea (tay) in one of his poems :

"Gentle Anne whom three realms obey
Does sometimes counsel take, and sometimes tea."

Coffee-houses, thus, grew in number, and soon each

coffee-house had its distinctive and fixed clientele—lawyers, politicians, authors, and so forth.

Politicians met here, but they had little circles or clubs of their own, and these met often in taverns. Theologians and Scientists did not look down upon the coffee-house. Even Sir Isaac Newton was an occasional visitor.

The influence of the coffee-house as a centre for Politics is well illustrated by the attempt of Charles to suppress them in 1675. But the regulation was not forced, so strong was the feeling against it.

The coffee-house of the time was the school of wit and dialectic. What the tavern had been to the sixteenth century, the coffee house was to the seventeenth and eighteenth.

Views were exchanged by literary men ; new compositions read, discussed and criticised. Many important literary compositions of the day were first read out in these coffee-house meetings. Some of them never saw the light of day, because they were vehemently criticised by the assembly presented. Some of them were hastened into publication because general opinion of the hearers was strongly in favour. Many young authors, who became great in later life, gathered inspiration, and even initiative from these coffee-house meetings. They even helped the biggest of a particular group to become greater. In the eyes of his chosen admirers, he re-discovered himself and could express himself much better than before. Some talents, on the other hand, were completely wasted through these coffee-house meetings. They were spoiled by undue flattery ; they developed vanity—and thus wasted their powers over useless writings.

The well-known writers of the day gathered at these places and talked to their friends—not infrequently at them. It was at a coffee-house that Pope found Dryden ; there it was that Addison discoursed to a select circle,

and Dr. Johnson delivered many of his "sententious periods".

Opinions were formed and circulated. Sometimes individual traits developed in new authors, at others, their corners were rubbed with contacts with those greater than themselves.

Pope gained much through coffee-houses—but the reverse is no less true. Others also gained no less through Pope, as they sat round him at the table and discussed freely about men and matters of the age. Thus these coffee-houses were of great importance in crystallising and consolidating literary and social fashions and opinions of the day.

A Short History and Development of English Satire (Before Pope)

English satire may be said to have taken its birth in the twelfth century. It is difficult to imagine any literature entirely devoid of Satire spirit. But it was not till sometime after the normal conquest that we find old compositions which may reasonably be called satires. Nigel Wireker is the name that stands out at this time. But the less regular Latin satires of the twelfth century are associated with a name of much greater importance in English literature. Walter Map was regarded as the Goliard of the time on account of his satirical verses in Latin. It is frankly medieval, and in language it follows the footsteps of Cicero, Horace or Ovid. The prevailing theme in the beginning was the church; later on, it became female sex.

English satire rest on such flimsy foundations till the beginning of the reign of Edward III. The brilliant victories of Edward III at Cressy, Poitiers and Halidon threw their glamour over the people, and the bards are too happy in the victories to be satirical on the enemies. But these victories did not improve the general condition of the country. Naturally the gifted pen of Langland lashes the church, the law and trade through his beautiful

allegory—*The Piers Plowman.* Langland's satire on church corruptions is so unsparing that there is a danger of forgetting that all the while he is a faithful son of the church. The abuse of pardon is most vigorously denounced in these satires.

Chaucer is humorous with a flavouring of satire; Langland is satirical with a slight flavouring of humour. Chaucer is bright and hopeful; Langland is oppressed with a sense of evils; Chaucer is singularly free from bitterness; his characters show universal tolerance.

The fifteenth century, thus, was destined to witness no summer. Chaucer was the single swallow.

At the close of the century, we reach William Dunbar. Dunbar followed Chaucer in handling his five-foot iambic line, but in one respect he was deficient as a satirist. He lacked moral earnestness. There is seldom behind his satire that force of conviction of which we are sensible in Langland. He flits from point to point, and dwells long on nothing.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Skelton assumed the role of the professional satirist, and with his caustic pen touched sores of all kinds. His position in the church did not restrain him from criticising the institution.

In 1551, Thomas More's *Utopia* gave to English literature a classic. Besides being a picture of an imaginary commonwealth, it is a satire on the actual condition of England. The sanitary regulations of the *Utopia* are an indirect criticism of the dirt and the smell of London.

It may be noticed that from the first rise of satire, the favourite theme was supplied by ecclesiastical abuses. But from the *Goliards* to *Piers Plowman*, criticism was directed far less against doctrine than against abuses of life. During the Reformation, this theme, alongwith the vain life led by the ecclesiasts, was given a great deal of vigour. Lyndsay's works—*The Satire of Three Estates* and *The Monarchie* are some of the representative satires on the political conditions of the time in a didactic tone.

But satire, so far, can hardly be said to be literary; it was incidental. It grew into a conscious branch of literature only when Latin models came to be studied and imitated as a result of classical Renascence. A hunt for the past exposed to their view the works of Perseus, Horace and Juvenal, and thereby inspired a literary reform alongside of the religious and social reform. These tendencies culminated in the development of a new kind of satire by Thomas Wyatt who led the way, as it is said, to Dryden and Pope. Though primarily a sonneteer, Wyatt has been called by Warton "the first polished English Satirist." It was due to Wyatt that the Italian terza rima was introduced as the fit measure for English Satire. Wyatt was happy in the choice of Horace as his model, for Juvenalian model would have given no room for those personal touches which are the most pleasing features of Wyatt's satires.

Though the satire was humanised by such self-revelation, yet the satirists groped for the right form, and the distinctions for finding the best so far tried was reserved for *Edmund Spenser*. His *Shepherd's Calendar* showed that Spenser knew how to look upon political and social life with the eye of a satirist. The unscrupulous accumulation of wealth through the ruin of others, the oppression of the tenant by the landlord, the shameless stealing and enclosure of public lands have been eloquently lashed in *Hall's* later works. Hall was followed by *George Whither*. But his platitudinous verbosity sadly mars the effect of his writing.

The Elizabethans allowed the romantic licence, and as M. Arnold puts it, "lost sense of the whole in eager quest for beautiful parts". They were curiously deaf and blind to incongruities such as those Hall ridicules, where the Hebraic is unnaturally mingled. Milton afterwards showed that mixture could be made, but those who attempted it in the reign of Elizabeth were not masters of Milton's secrets.

The eclipse of satire, which marked the closing years of the reign of James I, lasted through the whole of that

of his ill-fated son. For twenty years or more, the satire was only incidental. It was feebly employed in depicting the quarrels between the Puritans and the Papists, the Cavaliers and the Roundheads until Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* was published. It is a memorable work. The quarrel between Crown and Parliament is blended with that between Church and Dissent. It contains suggestions borrowed from Don Quixote, from the Fairy Queen, from the Arthurian legends. In spirit and effect, Butler is wholly medieval. He stands in relation to the part similar to that of Dante and the great Greek philosophers. The most notable man who attempted to follow Butler was Matthew Prior.

The Restoration age was an age of satire. There were various factors responsible for it. It came as a reaction against Puritan austerity. Freed from the chains, literature enjoyed a comparative freedom, and hence it satirised the age-old shackles and conventions. It was thus a revolt against the Puritan authority. False spiritual dogmas were denounced through the satire. But unfortunately the outspokenness of the Restoration period degenerated at times into vain cynicism. French influence also counted a great deal in this respect. Political antagonism, bitter party spirit, even personal jealousies and rivalries reflected themselves in the satires of the period. No wonder, the satire of the Restoration period is generally either political or personal in character.

Even before Dryden won his triumph, the heroic couplet was becoming more and more the accepted measure for satire. In the *Instructions and Directions to a Painter*, Walter and Denham had employed it. Rochester's *Satire against Mankind* embodied the general conception of the age: "Most men are cowards, all men must be knaves." In Oldham, we hear a higher strain. The best known of his works are the *Satires upon the Jesuits* which are Juvenalian in violence and intensity.

It was for *Dryden* to teach how to produce effects through wits without the confusion of violence and strength. In *Abasalom and Achitophel* (1681) which marks

the maturest satiric genius of Dryden, he combines smoothness of verse, lucidity of style and urbanity of manners—which make Dryden's satire so strikingly original. In English, there is hardly anything comparable to it. It is the work of an experienced man of the world as well as an accomplished scholar. The man of the world is seen in the deft way in which Abasalom's ambition is fed. He owns his ambition, but vanity whispers that it leans to the side of virtue. With a masterly skill, he skims over the dangerous ice, and frames criticism so as to be more welcome to the subjects than a panegyric. Of course, it is a political satire with a definite political object. Dryden believed that there could be no half-way between monarchy as he knew it, and the rule of the multitude.

The supreme merit of the satire is beyond doubt its superb gallery of portraits. And here he has no competition to fear except competition with himself.

Pope in his masterly portrait of Atticus rose to the same level, but Pope had Dryden to work upon ; and in Dryden there is a vein of humour which Pope did not possess.

Pope as a Satirist

Satire was a legacy of the Restoration to the age of Pope.

The true successor of Drydon was Pope, the poet of *The Dunciad* (1728). *The Dunçiad* is just *Mac Flecknoe* broadened out in scope from the individual to the class. Pope's work, no doubt, bears the impress of Dryden ; he had himself chosen the smoothness, fulness and variety of Dryden and Walter as his model. But *The Rape of the Lock* is almost free from the influence of Dryden. By inexhaustible resource and scintillating wit, Pope raises the mock-heroic to another plane higher than *Mac Flecknoe* which is merely a personal satire. "This is really the most exquisite speciman of filigree work" (Hazlitt) —"the most airy, the most ingenious, the most delightful with its gay good humour and nicest proportions" (Johnson).

Its immediate progenitor was Boileau who had borrow-

ed from the Italian. Pope, no doubt, is peculiarly skilful in mingling the great with the trivial, the important with the insignificant. Raillery of fashions and of the vanities of beaux and belles is the staple of *The Rape of the Lock* ; yet in it "beauty draws us with a single hair."

Of all Pope's satires, it is *The Dunciad* that has worn the worst. There were two Popes in the single frail body ; one who occasionally bares his own heart as in the fine compliment to Arbuthnot ; and another in whom spite and malignity were the dominant qualities. Unfortunately, it is the latter Pope who has the mastery of *The Dunciad*. Its strictures are essentially true and has sapped the vitality of *The Dunciad*.

What actually was it that actuated Pope to wage war against the Dunces ? It was the character of authorship of the times. So many people with absolutely no literary gift had taken to the profession of writing that Pope's high artistic sense revolted against literary productions. In the interest of art, he was filled with a sense of righteous indignation against them. His motive behind *The Dunciad*, as he himself declared, was "to rid the society of the pest of scribblers".

In fact, Pope's nature, his physical disabilities, the circumstances of his life—all drifted him towards satire. That is why, almost the whole of his work, in a way, is satirical.

But, as has been said already, Pope had a dual nature. If he could sink amazingly, he could rise gloriously. He has truly been regarded as one of the masters of poetic technique for his "correctness" he aimed at. He has been stigmatised as waspish, venomous, malignant. But it should carefully be borne in mind that if he was a bitter enemy, he was also a warm friend.

Truly, for energy Dryden, and for polish Pope are the culminating points of classical satire in English verse.

So it is not wrong to say that Pope's genius was mainly satirical. His temperament and the circumstances of life helped by the poetic qualities, drew him towards satire.

His literary enmities made him morbidly sensitive in his contact with the world. The brilliance and conciseness of his style ; his skilful use of irony, his pungent epigrams, and the fondness with which he lingered over the subject of himself—all found expression in satire.

As a satirist Pope is more the imitator of Horace than of Juvenal. He adopted the former to defend himself and assail his enemies, and this theme of the artist's own personality is the characteristic feature ; but Pope at the same time cherished a lofty claim for his satires, for he believed them to be an instrument of righteousness, aiming to crush down the plague of envious scribblers by which the society was infested. He was, therefore, proudly conscious of his office as a satirist.

The greatest virtue of Pope's satire is his artifice. His wit is cool. He remains completely unperturbed in the face of gravest provocations. His epigrams are very keen, and his irony mordant. There is an over-all polish which attracts the best of readers.

Dryden attacks parties and sects ; Swift fulminates against mankind ; but Pope, in his satire, chiefly attacks immediate persons.

Pope as a Critic

Pope took the arts of Horace and Boileau to adopt as many of their principles as possible. Pope's critical opinion is embodied mainly in his (1) *Essay on Criticism* (2) *Epistle of Horace to Augustus* (3) *Letters.*

Essay on Criticism is a valuable and interesting document. It is an attempt to codify Renaissance criticism with regard to poetical imitation.

It dwells upon the chaotic state of criticism during his day—and the many abuses of art which prevailed. It lays down his main rule of the following nature : "Stick to the ordinary, the common place ; follow nature, and do not talk about such unnatural things as ice and snow." It cautions against desertion of nature in the direction of excess.

Nature was to be the test of art,—but an artificialised nature arranged according to the fashion of town-haunting society—a nature which submitted herself to the system of convention and generalisation. · Singularity, except in doing the usual thing best, is to be avoided. Nature still—but nature methodised.

Pope illustrates the necessity of his doctrine by examples on false wit. He defines true wit thus :

"True wit is nature to advantage drest,
What oft was thought, but never so well expressed."

Pope describes the character of a good critic and gives a historical sketch of those who have distinguished themselves.

A bad critic, says he, is a more dangerous person than a bad poet. True taste is as uncommon as true genius. Nature, of course, is the guide ; rules extracted from observed works of genius are but "methodised nature." We derive them not from nature directly, but from ancient poets. A good critic is candid, modest, well-bred and sincere.

His *Essay on Criticism* is, on the whole, fragmentary and desultory, though containing some universal truths. It touches only the rules on which taste should be formed, and limits within which personal judgment should be exercised. This book does not make any remarkable contribution to the subject of criticism, because there is nothing original about it. But historically, Pope's *Essay on Criticism* has a value, because it sums up the need of classical poetry. His theory of "nature methodised" is also faulty—as even a fervent admirer of the Greeks may ask : "Did it happen that the Greeks discovered all these rules ?" They had nothing to derive from.

Pope's *Epistle to Augustus* embodies a criticism though very superficial, of literature from Chaucer to his own times. Desultory in character, it is inevitably tinged by those personal feelings which many years of literary squabbles had helped ill-health and natural disposition to arouse in Pope. He admired France—because England

learnt correctness from France (Racine and Corneille particularly). He also admits that Shakespeare's tragedies should not have been judged by Aristotelian rules. He criticises great poets like Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Sidney, Dryden, but does not lay down any definite rules of conduct in poetry. He is satisfied with finding their faults, but does not say much about how things could have been improved. His criticism is thus an appraisal of individual poets ; he never attacks parties or groups. This is the result of a general polish that he had in his character.

Pope's Letters : Pope's letters to Swift, Bolingbroke and others were largely doctored by himself before publication. There is much affectation in them, but with him affectation had almost become second nature. This was partly the result of the literary battles in which he was often the challenger without the physical strength to endure them, or the moral confidence to save himself from acute suffering. In spite of that, it is not difficult to find in his *Letters* some signs of his better nature. There is genuine affection and generous feeling to set against the venom and the falsehoods which disfigure the brilliance of his work as a man of literature.

General Remarks on Pope's Satire

The essence of satire is the power to mix jest and earnest. Satirists, thus, fall into two classes : There are those who, like Horace, have themselves in view—and whose style rarely savours of rhetoric or poetry.

There is the other class of which Juvenal is the type. It deals less directly with the personality of the writer ; it bases its style on poetry, and finds in rhetoric the enforcement of its themes. It is not merely by chance that Pope imitated Horace, and Johnson imitated Juvenal. Pope's adaptation of Horace enabled him to defend himself and attack his enemies. A difference in temperament caused in him a venom from which his original as a sociable man of the world had wholly cleared himself, but the literary vehicle could easily be turned to carry venom. The style of Juvenal follows the epic flow of Virgil. The

semblance of dignity thus acquired fits with a more sombre, though less spiteful, view of life. The sinner is less prominent than the sin. Suffering, whether deserved or undeserved, is presented as a result of errors in heart or head lying so deep in human nature that those who display them are not fully conscious of their wrong-doing. It is want of thought and feeling that leaves the industrious scholar and man of letters to suffer from

"Toil, Envy, Want, the Patron and the Jail".

Pope's causerie veils promiscuousness in the elegant chit-chat of conversation.

"Art, Imitation and Exercise"—these are the three principles which a poet should follow, according to Pope. For—

"True ease in writing comes from Art, not chance ;
As those walk best who have learned to dance".

× × × ×

"Those who could not win the mistress, wooed the maid".

Pope As A Poet

The character of Pope's poetry has always been a favourite subject for wrangling and paradox and self contradictions. In his own day his superiors such as Swift, and his equals, such as Addison, had no doubt about his greatness, while the very "grub street vermin" whom he foolishly provoked and persecuted, evidently regarded him with almost as much envy and secret admiration as hatred. Between these two conflicting opinions, the question "Is Pope a great Poet ?" has become rather controversial.

It is absurd to deny Pope's claim to a pretty high place in the poetic firmament. He pervaded his age—and for a time commanded the worship of a large section of the cultured audience. Many will agree that Pope displayed at least two of the qualifications to be laid down as necessary for the poet—vivid expression of his actual subjects and artistic use of such metre as he actually employed.

Joseph Warton said that "Pope was not transcendently a poet." He said so perhaps because there was a large number of subjects which he could not, and certainly did not, treat, and there was a limited region of metre in which he was at home. But we can never be blind to his extraordinary felicity of expression and his wonderful command of such metre as was congenial to him.

Some are of opinion that Pope had been served heir by Providence to Dryden. It is not wholly correct, for to the greatest part of the inheritance he did not indeed succeed. "He could not forge and wield the olympian thunderbolt of Dryden's couplet ; even if he had been able to do so, he could not have changed it with the massive strength of Dryden's sense. His processes of refinement of form are very simple, though idle partisanship, or the mere desire to be different, has sometimes denied this. In practice he never quite abandoned the license of Alexandrine and triplet, but he reduced it more and more. He emphasised the importance of the central pause ; he redoubled the anti-thesis between verbs, adjectives, substantives in the two halves of the same line ; he increased the separation of the couplets ; he toned off the final rhymes to as light a character as possible ; he indulged very seldom in "wrenched accent."

Originality is certainly not among the merits of Pope's poetry. Greatest of his admirers even do not claim it. A large portion of his poems is made up of translations and imitations. "He practically never thinks for himself or sees for himself, while, except in some touches of personal affection and many more of personal resentment and spite, he scarcely ever feels for himself." (Saintsbury). It is always what somebody else has thought. But he expresses others' thoughts so well, with such admirable wit in the various meanings which he himself attaches to the word. Lady Mary was perfectly right as to fact when she said that her original admiration of the *Essay on Criticism* ceased when she found it was all stolen from ancients or borrowed at second-hand. Warburton knew perfectly well what he was doing when he plastered

and varnished and buttressed with comment and exposition Pope's well meant, admirably expressed, but sometimes almost non-sensical and platitudinous attempts to "build a mansion of Bolingbroke's half-baked bricks and his own untempered mortar in the *Essay on Man.*" (Saintsbury). The amiable endeavours to discover in *The Dunciad* a generous defence of good literature against those who disgraced it become distressingly unsuitable, when we find that there is nothing practically in the whole book except personal and sometimes far from honest caricatures of individual writers whom the poet disliked. Some parts of it are mere parodies; others are full of burning indignation, and neither way does *The Dunciad* prove itself a piece of high class literature.

But it must be admitted that he has a consummate command of presenting other's thoughts in the manner or diction exactly suited to those thoughts. It is this wonderful faculty of mere expression of command over diction and phrase, that gave to the old and borrowed ideas a new guise. He never delves beneath the surface for hidden wealth of suggestions or soars into the ether for unexpected fights of it. But in his own way and under his own conditions, it is almost impossible for him to make a mistake, The thought may be trifling, obvious, at times base; the sentiment may be plainly insincere; the very wit, when you roll it over a little in your mind, may be slightly vapid; but the phrasing is triumphant. The masterly and delightful craftsmanship in words you cannot deny for a moment;—You cannot deny his clearness without meanness, his rhetoric without bombast, the easy procession of phraseology, the cunning climax of arrangement—all these have a perennial attraction. His translation of Homer, for example, may not have been able to reproduce Homer exactly. Yet it enjoyed extraordinary popularity for the greater part of a century because of the attractive way in which things were described. Many boys and girls of the age learnt the story of *The Fall of Troy* from Pope.

Pope had little sympathy with nature. He wanted to methodise nature and bring it to man's use. Nature was

never desired for its own sake. Through it, he wanted to introduce into life *Smoothness*, *Correctness* and *Grace*. *Art*, *Imitation* and *Exercise* were the three principles according to Pope which could attain perfection in poetic taste. That is why subject-matter is always a secondary consideration with him ; his attention is always fixed on the refinement and perfection of his verses.

As has already been said, Pope was so much occupied with the form of his poetry that subject-matter became a secondary consideration with him. He chiselled his work as exquisitely as a master-sculptor. Naturally, no other poet after Shakespeare has contributed more quotations to every day language than him.

He followed consciously throughout the advice given to him by an eminent critic—"Be a correct poet." In search for correctness, he has been carped at by many, for everybody is liable to errors, and Pope is no exception.

Mere correctness has never been the aim of the greatest poets. There is something far more important than this that a really great poet must show. A poet is not a school master after all.

But really great poets are not so large ; they can be counted on finger's ends. So, no literature, to speak of English literature the least, affords to ignore the claims of the second order of poets who return to the readers the thoughts of the age in a melodious and picturesque language. Pope, thus, holds the mirror to his own age, to the artificial society of his own times, and not to nature. It is not without adequate reason that Matthew Arnold called Dryden and Pope— not poet—but "high priests of an age of Prose."

While comparing Pope with Dryden, Dr. Johnson says :

"The style of Dryden is capricious and varied, that of Pope is cautious and uniform. Dryden is vehement and rapid, Pope is always smooth, uniform and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, diversified by varied exuberance of abundant vegetation ; Pope's is a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, and levelled by the roller."

And Pope was *witty*, too, no less. It was not the natural wit of a rambler through the forest allowing his fancy to weave its way along the untrodden ways. It was the polished wit of the drawing hero of many a wordy battle—Cunning, deeply intellectual, pungent at times, but always pleasing to the ears.

Dr. Johnson admirably describes *Pope's wit* in these words :

"For Pope, as an exponent of wit in poetry, we all may throw caps and money, votes and voices. Nor is that wit of the noisy or flashy order which sooner or later tires. The salt of *mere wit* is re-salted with common sense ; and that again with a certain purely intellectual quality difficult positively to define, for it is lacking in depth, in height, in originality, in several other good things, but easy to perceive and not evanescent. And so he enjoyed little rest or refreshment himself, he has provided much for others."

And this polished wit—artificial, highly intellectual and properly methodised—gave to the readers sufficient scope for the exercise of their minds. And certainly this exercise was not totally without rewards. His wit has a rapier-thrust which cut his opponents without any mercy.

Pope—The Spokesman of his Age

The three important poems in which Pope can be called undisputably the representative or spokesman of his age are—*The Rape of the Lock* picturing its frivolities ; *The Dunciad* exposing the squalor of the age ; *The Essay on Man*, echoing the philosophy of the age to which he belonged. His own attitude towards literature is very well expressed in his *Essays on Criticism* wherein he exhibits in clear terms the merits and limitations of the eighteenth century poetry. What they admire, what they dislike, is patent to the most casual reader.

He was a master of literary mosaic. There is nothing of the easy breadth and vigour of Dryden in his satirical verse. But he excelled Dryden in exquisite finish and detailed touches of fineness. Pope's poems knew no

solidarity or homogeneity—with the exception perhaps of *The Rape of the Lock* they are just like highly polished pieces cunningly fitted in a whole—and remarkable for workmanship rather than integral beauty.

To the Heroic Couplets of Dryden he gave the delicate touch of a gossamer, and this more than makes up for the lack of strength. If at times, the glitter and sparkle fade into dullness, the occasions are comparatively rare. And the most amazing thing about him is that he sustained his mercurial smartness and aptness throughout his literary career. There are few graces of style beyond lightness and crispness. The beauties are of the obvious kind. No one can dress up a common place sentiment or humdrum thought in finer clothes than Pope.

But there is no hint in his work of high imagination, of subtle fancy—in fact, no sense of mystery, no romance, no depth of feeling, no greatness of impulse.

In the age that followed, the deficiencies of Pope in this respect were so glaring as to call down on him undeserved contempt of many. Jane Austen grants him "two inches of ivory"—and within these limitations, there is no more skilful artist. He may not be reckoned with the master-spirits of English literature, but he was, at any rate, an incomparable craftsman and a delightful wit.

Pope influenced English poetry till about the end of the eighteenth century, and this influence was far from healthy. Good poetry always has an inward meaning and a bright and attractive outward form. No real poet affords to neglect either of these two essential parts of poetry.

But in Pope's poetry, we do not get much of the heart—and practically nothing of nature. And those who followed Pope after him, suffered naturally from the absence of cordial emotion and natural impulse. So that those poets who tried after him to restore simplicity, love of nature, spontaneity and genuine emotion into English poetry, protested strongly against the baneful influence of Pope on English poetry of the times. Cowper says, "Pope

made poetry a mere mechanic art" ; Wordsworth says, "Pope never had his eye upon his subject" ; Keats calls him a "handicraftsman who wore the mask of Poesy".

The Essay on Man (1733-4.)—(a) Bolingbroke

It is impossible to think of the *Essay on Man* without thinking of Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke. As a political and philosophical writer, Bolingbroke was of considerable importance in connection with *The Essay on Man.* He was a very intimate friend of Pope—Pope calls him his, "guide, philosopher and friend." He exercised a strong influence on the latter portion of Pope's life. After the failure of his political career, Bolingbroke started as a philosopher. He had no consistent system of philosophy, but he may be described as a nationalist with a tendency to Pantheism. He set Pope to write a philosophic poem—of which he supplied the material partly in prose fragments and partly through conversation. Pope is believed to have pieced them together, turned them into verse, and supplied the poetical illustrations. The result was the four books of the *Essay on Man* (1733-34). Hence, before looking into the *Essay on Man*, it is necessary to know something about Bolingbroke.

St. John, Lord Bolingbroke

Bolingbroke was born at Battersea which is now a part of London. His was an ancient and prosperous family. He was educated at Eton—and then at Oxford, and became a member of Parliament in the year 1700. He was a High-churchman, and he joined the Tory party in the Parliament. Very soon he got the secretaryship of war in the cabinet. This ministry supported the war of Spanish succession—the war of the Grand Alliance against Louis XIV at the time of the Duke of Marlborough's great victories. Just a few years later, the Whig party came into power, and Bolingbroke, alongwith some others, had to go out of office. But political intrigues carried on by the Tories succeeded, and Bolingbroke was brought back into office. His friend the Earl of Oxford wanted to give him the Prime Minister's place. But all their plans ended in smoke when the Queen died.

When George I came to the throne, he chose all his ministers from among the Whigs. Knowing fully well that George I was against him, he fled to France, and during his absence, he was charged with high treason. He then became the chief adviser of the Pretender in France. But he could not stick to his favour long. He was suspected of having insinuated the Revolution of 1715, and was dismissed forthwith.

Bolingbroke returned to England in 1723, and received the King's pardon. Two years later, he got back all the property that was confiscated by the State, but not his peerage.

It was during this period that Bolingbroke developed great intimacy with Pope. He had real literary power, but politics occupied his entire energy and time. Pope was very much indebted to him for all the help he received from him. For his *Essay on Man*, Pope's debts to him are immense.

(b) The Essay on Man

Since Pope had no philosophy and Bolingbroke was no more than a reckless amateur, the poem cannot be said to be of very great literary value. Pope did not even recognise the rationalistic tendency of Bolingbroke's lucubrations. Though no devout Romanist, he never had any thought of leaving his church, and he genuinely believed his work to be what it claimed to be—"a vindication of the ways of God to man." Of course, this claim is not entirely correct, but it does have high qualities both ethical and poetic. It is full of humanity. Although Pope belonged to a church which was exposed to persecution, he had a wholesome hatred of bigotry.

The work is in patches no doubt, but many of the passages are surpassingly brilliant. They were mostly episodes, not consistent with the theme, and often borrowed from other philosophical writers, but Pope's deriving powers rose here to its highest pitch ; by crispness and

terseness, by illustration and by melody, Pope made them his own.

The Essay on Man was given to the world in parts ; the first epistle was published first anonymously in 1732, and the last in 1734. Pope lived for ten years after this date. It is difficult to guess why he did not complete the essay ; it could not be for want of time.

The Epistles : The subject of the first epistle is Man in relation to the Universe, the second, the Poet himself as an Individual ; the third deals with the relationship with Society, and the fourth, with regard to Happiness.

In the first epistle, the poet argues "from the known to the unknown." A small portion of the universe can be seen and known by man ; but in the universe, there is a scale of beings. It is a privilege to know that the universe is made for the good of man. Man, therefore, must submit to Providence, must take it for granted that the Divine order is perfect.

The main principle on which the second Epistle is based forms a very popular quotation from Pope :

"The proper study of Mankind is Man". In man himself there is a balance that makes for order—a balance between the two principles of self-love and order. The very fact that Man is imperfect in many respects proves that God is great and perfect.

In the third, we get how God is really good—and the divine order aims at the general good of mankind. The operation of reason in the world—and the instinct of animals prove this fact beyond doubt. Self-love and social love are, after all, identical.

The fourth epistle discusses happiness as the sole end of man. "God meant happiness for all, and therefore made it depend on general laws. Happiness does not consist in external goods, such as wealth, honour, fame, which are unequally divided. Hope and fear maintain the balance of happiness. God cannot alter general laws to suit individuals. The good may at times suffer, yet

the good are the happiest. Virtue only, and virtue held in due submission to Providence, is happiness."

The ideas are not strictly original, nor is there anything extraordinary or startling about them. They were supplied to him by Lord Bolingbroke either through conversation or in writing. It is even said by Lord Bathurst that "*The Essay on Man* was originally composed in prose by Lord Bolingbroke, and that Mr. Pope did no more than put it into verse."

But this statement does not appear to be true, because the "poetic imagery which makes a great part of the poem was Pope's own" (Boswell's Life of Johnson Vol. VII).

It seems very likely thus that the "philosophic stamina," the framework of the poem, was supplied by Bolingbroke. Pope himself admits that he "urged" to write it by "my friend, my genius."

Pope's contribution is the 'art of the poem', the wonderful compression of the language, the beautiful poetical imagery, the illustrations borrowed from several sources, but exquisitely fitted into the framework. There is no controversy about this.

But the real criticism is about the optimism of the doctrine preached in the *Essay* : "Whatever is, is right"y How can everything be right in the world ? So manc people die young, full of bright promises and immens potentialities ; So many good men suffer terribly for nothing—for practically no fault of their own ; natural calamities sweep away a large toll of the smiling population of the world ; wars shatters homes. Are they all for good ? Voltaire also puts the same question. The Earthquake of Lisbon (1759), which killed over 50,000 people, could not have been altogether right—and for the good of the world. The riddle of the painful earth is almost insoluble.

Whether poetry should be a proper vehicle of religious and philosophical thoughts—is a controversial point, for some say, the aim of poetry is to yield aesthetic and uplifting joy. But whatever that may be, the *Essay*

Man cannot be called a great philosophical poem. It is not a homogenous whole ; it is mere a collection of admirable and pithy sayings—a few beautiful epigrams that enriched English language no doubt, but did not very much advance man's knowledge of philosophy. It presents a kind of poetry which is eminently suitable for the eighteenth century readers.

But, as Courthope says, it is not without reason that the *Essay on Man* has acquired a world-wide reputation. It has been translated into almost all European languages. Many great scholars and poets of the age are full of sincere praise for this monumental work of Pope. *Voltaire* calls it, "the most beautiful, the most useful, the most sublime didactic poem that has ever been written in any language."

Marmontel claims : "Pope has shown how high poetry can soar on the wings of philosophy".

Stewart declares : "*The Essay on Man* is the noblest specimen of philosophical poetry which our language affords".

The Essay on Man (1733-34) thus is a few episodic and incompatible philosophies pieced together in heroic verse into four didactic epistles dealing with man's relation to the universe, to himself, to society, and to happiness. It is addressed to Lord Bolingbroke whose shallow deism influenced Pope's theodicean purpose. It aims at 'vindicating the ways of the God to man' for 'whatever is, is right.' It presents, in short, the complacent philosophy of the eighteenth century. It cannot be called a conceptual poem ; its erudition and philosophical tone are rather superficial, its arguments are dogmatic and unsustained.

But its metrical dexterity and borrowed comfortable precepts are catalysed into such brilliant epigrams that, outside the work of Shakespeare, no other is so fertile a source for memorable quotations.

His great search was not the search of Paracelsus for Truth ; it was for Style.

Critics have admitted that the poem is chiefly interesting as a readable statement of the form which infidelity took in the minds of English thinkers of the last century. It is an exceedingly inconsistant statement, because what Bolingbroke had gathered rather at random was further confused by Pope's disinclination to thorough systamization and by his aversion to open infidelity which in England always meant contempt for the social system. That Pope was very much agitated by the accusations of infidelity that were brought against the poem is well known. That is why he did not publish it under his name at first, but waited to observe the effect it might have on the public. Yet it is not surprising that the general public failed to detect the deism of the *Essay on Man,* because not only are there inconsistencies in the poem, but there are many passages of such brilliant and eloquent appeal in behalf of virtue that they might well disarm criticism. It was far from being a religious poem, like the *Paradise Lost* ; it was an attempt 'to vindicate the ways of God to man'.

After all, it makes little difference what a poet writing on such a subject believes ; what makes a poem is the clearness and fervour with which he expresses what he has to say, whether his message be one of hope or hate, of belief or doubt, of optimism or pessimism. Pope, in fact, lacked any animating belief ; he was impressed by a number of theories that were in the air and that he had come across in his reading, and he had a wonderful gift of expression. Consequently we find some of the commonplaces of his day admirably stated. In its time, it was accused of unorthodoxy and of incoherency, but the energy of the best passages has always found admirers. They are still part of the classics of the language. His platitudes sometimes make us think, he is descending and talking to us from a superior sphere to lash scribblers who had sinned against taste by their foolish verses, and to give us in highly serious tone ordinary instructions for every day life. In *Essay on Man*, Pope was certainly a representative of his own age, *but he did not, through his essay,*

give any particular twist or turn to his age to be called the precurser or the maker of an agé of his own. He created new decorations, new modes, new garb of thought ; but he failed to give to the flight of human imagination a new direction, a new base to build the future on. Yet we read the *Essay* even today as a pleasant pastime, and not unoften as a well-chiselled and beautifully regulated piece of moral instruction.

A passing mention about the language and metre of the *Essay on Man* may not be out of place here. Major changes have not taken place in the meanings of words since the age of Pope. Of course there are some words that have changed their meanings or shades of meanings. But these changes are very few. In fact, more changes took place in English between Shakespeare and Pope than between Pope and Tennyson. There have been changes in spelling, too, as in pronunciation. Pope's rhyming in the *Essay* is in accordance with the pronunciation of words then prevalent. As such, it may sound somewhat different today.

The metre used throughout is the heroic couplet. In it there are ten syllables in each line, with the accent on every second syllable. At times, rarely though, an eleventh unaccented syllable was added. It is no exaggeration to say that the heroic couplet reached its highest perfection in the hands of Pope. Pope was really a complete master of this metre. He, as also his disciples and imitators, used the heroic couplet for poetic expression. These couplets sounded beautifully impressive in patches, but in comparatively longer poems, these couplets often lost their charm ; they sounded dull and drab and monotonous.

The Social Scene during the Age

There are many different aids to those who wish to imbibe the atmosphere of the eighteenth century. Some will best appreciate the period by studying its costume ; others by contemplating Adam doorways, chippendale chairs, sheraton side-boards or wedgewood ware ; some by turning over the cartoons of Hogarth or admiring the

portraiture of the century ; while others will most readily understand it in its characteristic literature—in the poetry of Pope, in Boswell's picture of the Johnson circle, in the philosophic treatises of Berkeley and Hume or the great history of Gibbon. But for those to whom atmosphere means specifically social atmosphere, the best guides are : The poems, the novels and the memoirs of the century.

About the *Court-life*, the memoirs of Lord Harvey may be a suitable guide. Deficient in moral principle, his outlook on men and affairs was cynical and ill-natured. He was foppish and effiminate, and had a keen relish for scandal. Such a man was likely to have enemies. And Harvey had many : one of them was vitriolic in his hatred : it was Pope who made one of the most venomous attacks on him in the character of Porus.

While the inner life of George III's court was both dull and decorous, one must remember that the nobility at the close of the seventeenth century and the opening of the eighteenth included a high percentage of rakes. It is probably true that on the whole there was a distinctly better moral tone in the days of Anne than in those of Charles II, less vice and less open defiance of the laws of decency and restraint. On the other hand, there was certainly an increase of brutality and coarseness. Drinking and gaming were the prevailing vices of the eighteenth century. Port drinking spread the ravages of gout which was the characteristic malady of the eighteenth century. Gambling was a national disease among the leisured classes of both sexes. Thousand of pounds would be won or lost at a single sitting in a fashionable club or a decent coffee-house.

It is possible to distinguish broadly between two different types of temperament in the eighteenth century, just as between two different types of countenance, as a glance at any collection of portraits of the century will prove. These may be differentiated as the robust and boorish type on the one hand, the thin and quizzical on the other. A large proportion of the distinguished men of the time had heavy corpulent figures, fat cheeks, and

double chins. As thackeray says : "Swift was fat ; Addison was fat ; Gay and Thomson were preposterously fat ; all that fuddling and punch-drinking, that club and coffee-house boosing, shortened the lives and enlarged the waistcoats of men of that age." Only Pope was a singular exception—'lean, disproportionately developed, with weak tottering feet and trembling nerves.'

The Design of 'An Essay on Man'

As Pope himself says, an *Essay on Man* contains some pieces on human life and manners, as "they come home to men's business and manners." He has taken Man in the abstract, his nature and his state. It is necessary, Pope thinks, to understand properly the circumstances Man is placed under, his personal predilections, likes and dislikes, fads and fancies, weakness and strength of character, before any judgment is passed on his actions in life. In this connection, another thing must never be lost sight of : we must judge everything on the back-ground of his mission in life—the main purpose for which he is living on earth.

Life ought to be observed in the light of reason. There is something like the anatomy of the mind, just as there is the anatomy of the body. So, in order to know or understand life properly, the broad facts of life, which are there is clear outline, must be studied carefully in the correct prospective. No time need be lost on minor details which lead to unnecessary complications. The number of absolute and invariable truths is limited. The aim of life should be to attain some or all of them. Paying undue attention to minor truths of life gives rise to disputes, and leads us astray from the main path. Not only this ; it creates differences of opinion regarding the standard of morality or code of conduct.

The chief merit of the poem, as Pope himself says, is steering between the extremes of the theories of good and bad propounded in life, and to lay down a short clear, consistent, yet comprehensive, system of ethics.

This could better have been done in prose. But Pope

chose verse and rhyme for two obvious reasons : (1) Principles, maxims or precepts written in verse appeal to the readers more easily—and can more delightfully be retained in their memories. (2) The other reason is totally personal. Pope felt that he could express those principles of conduct more concisely and solidly in poetry than in prose.

The *Essay*, thus, is a general map of man—meant for the common run of humanity. Particular or individual cases, of course, will differ in extent or limit within the framework laid down. The Epistles, therefore, are expected to be a source of delightful instruction. The plan, therefore, is ambitious enough. Pope holds out a big promise. But he has not been able to fulfil even a remarkable portion of it. It is difficult to imagine what would have been the result, if he had completed the project by adding other epistles to it. So far, as later critics opine, it is an ill-pieced poem of dazzling commonplaces presented in a polished and attractive garb for the recreation or leisurely study of the upper middle classes in society. It reflects the age—its manners, tendencies and thought-currents, but fails to point towards a definite path leading to real happiness or eternal bliss.

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AN ESSAY ON MAN

IN FOUR EPISTLES TO

HENRY ST. JOHN, LORD BOLINGBROKE

THE DESIGN

HAVING proposed to write some pieces on human life and manners, such as (to use my Lord Bacon's expression) *came home to men's business and bosoms*, I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering Man in the abstract, his nature and his state ; since, to prove any moral duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what condition and relation it is placed in, and what is the proper end and purpose of its being.

The science of human nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a few clear points. There are not many certain truths in this world. It is therefore in the anatomy of the mind as in that of the body ; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The disputes are all upon these last, and I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the wits than the hearts of men against each other, and have diminished the practice, more than advanced the theory of morality. If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in streering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a temperate yet not inconsistent, and a short yet not imperfect, system of ethics.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards. The other may seem odd, but it is true; I found I could express them more shortly this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain, than that much of the force as well as grace of arguments or instructions depends on their conciseness. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in detail, without becoming dry and tedious; or more poetically, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning. If any man can unite all these without any diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published, is only to be considered as a general map of Man, marking out no more than the greater parts, their extent, their limits, and their connection, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow. Consequently, these Epistles in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the fountains, and clearing the passage. To deduce the rivers, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable.

EPISTLE I

ARGUMENT

Of the nature and state of man with respect to the universe.

Of Man in the abstract.—I. That we can judge only with regard to our own systems, being ignorant of the relation of systems and things, 17. II. That man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general order of things, and conformable to ends and relations to him unknown, 35. III. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, 77. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of His dispensations, 113. V. The absurdity of conceiting himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world, which is not in the natural, 131. VI. The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the angels, and on the other the bodily qualifications of the brutes, though, to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable, 173. VII. That throughout the whole visible world, an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that reason alone countervails all the other faculties, 207. VIII. How much further this order and subordination of living creatures may extend, above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed, 233. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire, 259. X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, 281.

EPISTLE I

AWAKE, my St. John ! leave all meaner things
To low ambition, and the pride of kings.
Let us (since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us, and to die,)
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man ;
A mighty maze ! but not without a plan ;
A wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot ;
Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield ;
The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar ;
Eye nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise,
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can ;
But vindicate the ways of God to man.
Say first, of God above, or man below,
What can we reason, but from what we know ?
Of man, what see we but his station here,
From which to reason, or to which refer ?
Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds oompose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied being peoples every star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame the bearings and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies,
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd thro' ? or can a part contain the whole ?

Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee ?

Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,
Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less?
Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?
Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's Satellites are less than Jove?

Of systems possible, if 'tis confest
That wisdom infinite must form the best,
where all must full or coherent be,
And all that rises, rise in due degree;
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man:
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong?

Respecting man whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all.
In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's, one single can its end produce;
Yet serves to second too some other use.
So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god:
Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend
His actions'. passions', being's, use and end;
Why doing, suff'ring, cheek'd, impell'd; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place,
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,

What matter, soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to-day is as completely so,
As who began a thousand years ago.
Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:
Or who could suffer being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?
Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.
Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n:
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher death, and God adore.
What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never *is*, but always *to be* blest:
The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.
Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,
Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To Be, contents his natural desire,
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

Go, wiser thou ! and in thy scale of sense,
Weigh thy opinion against Providence ;
Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such,
Say, Here he gives too little, there too much :
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
Yet cry, If man 's unhappy, God 's unjust ;
If man alone ingross not Heave'n's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there :
Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Re-judge his justice, be the god of God.
In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies ;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels, men rebel :
And who but wishes to invert the laws
Of order, sins against th' Eternal Cause.

Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use ? pride answers, ' 'Tis for mine :
For me kind nature wakes her genial pow'r,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r ;
Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew ;
For me the mine a thousand treasures brings ;
For me health gushes from a thousand springs ;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise ;
My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies.'

But errs not nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep ?
'No ('tis reply'd) the first Almighty Cause
Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws ;
Th' exceptions few ; some change since all began ;
And what created perfect ?'—Why then man ?
If the great end be human happiness,
Then nature deviates ; and can man do less ?

As much that end a constant course requires
Of show'rs and sun-shine, as of man's desires ;
As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
As men for ever temp'rate, calm, and wise.
If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,
Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline ?
Who knows but He, whose hand the light'ning forms,
Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms ;
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind ?
From pride, from pride our very reas'ning springs ;
Account for moral as for nat'ral things :
Why charge we heaven in those, in these acquit ?
In both to reason right is to submit.

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,
Were there all harmony, all virtue here ;
That never air or ocean felt the wind,
That never passion discompos'd the mind.
But all subsists by elemental strife ;
And passions are the elements of life.
The gen'ral order, since the whole began,
Is kept in nature, and is kept in man.

What would this man ? Now upward will he soar,
And little less than angel, would be more ;
Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
Made for his use all creatures if he call,
Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all ;
Nature to these, without profusion, kind,
The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd ;
Each seeming want compensated of course,
Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force ;
All in exact proportion to the state ;
Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.
Each beast, each insect, happy in its own :
Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone ?
Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
Be pleas'd with nothing, if not blest with all ?

The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
No pow'rs of body, or of soul to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear.
Why has not man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, man is not a fly.
Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,
T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?
Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?
Or, quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,
And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still
The whisp'ring zephyr, and the purling rill?
Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives, and what denies?
Far as creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:
Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race,
From the green myriads in the peopled grass:
What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:
Of smell, the headlong lioness between,
And hound sagacious on the tainted green:
Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,
To that which warbles through the vernal wood?
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:
In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew?
How instinct varies in the grov'lling swine,
Compar'd, half reas'ning elephant, with thine!
'Twixt that, and reason, what a nice barrier?
For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near!
Remembrance and reflection how allied;
What thin partitions sense from thought divide?
And middle natures, how they long to join,
Yet never pass th' insuperable line!

Without this just gradation, could they be
Subjected, these to those, or all to thee?
The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,
Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?

See, thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
Above, how high progressive life may go!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being! which from God began,
Natures æthereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee.
From thee to nothing. On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll
Alike essential to th' amazing whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the whole must fall.
Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
Planets and suns run lawless thro' the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;
Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,
And nature tremble to the throne of God.
All this dread order break—for whom? for thee?
Vile worm!—oh madness! pride! impiety!

What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspir'd to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another, in this gen'ral frame;
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains
The great directing Mind of all ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

Cease then, nor order imperfection name:
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.
Submit. In this, or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:
Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
All nature is but art unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good;
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite
One truth is clear, 'Whatever is, is right.'

EPISTLE II

ARGUMENT

Of the nature and state of man with respect to himself, as an individual.

I. The business of man not to pry into God, but to study himself. His middle nature: his powers and frailties, 1. The limits of his capacity, 19. II. The two principles of man, self-love and reason, both necessary, 53. Self-love the stronger, and why, 67. Their end the same, 81. III. The passions, and their use, 93. The predominant passion, and its force, 131. Its necessity, in directing men to different purposes, 165. Its providential use, in fixing our principle, and ascertaining our virtue, 175. IV. Virtue and vice joined in our mixed nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: What is the office of reason, 203. V. How odious vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, 217. VI. That, however, the ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections, 231. How usefully these are distributed in all orders of men, 241. How useful they are to society, 249. And to individuals, in every state, 261, and every age of life, 271.

EPISTLE II

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is man.
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great :
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest ;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast ;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer ;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err ;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little or too much :
Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd ;
Still by himself abus'd or disabus'd ;
Created half to rise, and half to fall ;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all ;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd :
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world !

Go, wondrous creature ! mount where science guides,
Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides ;
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old Time, and regulate the sun ;
Go, soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair ;
Or tread the mazy round his follow'rs trod,
And quitting sense call imitating God ;
As eastern priests in giddy circles run,
And turn their heads to imitate the sun
Go, teach eternal wisdom how to rule—
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool !

Superior beings, when of late they saw
A mortal man unfold all nature's law,

Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
And shew'd a Newton as we shew an ape.

Could he, whose rules the rapid comet bind,
Describe or fix one movement of his mind ?
Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,
Explain his own beginning, or his end ;
Alas what wonder ! man's superior part
Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art ;
But when his own great work is but begun,
What reason weaves, by passion is undone.

Trace science then, with modesty thy guide ;
First strip off all her equipage of pride ;
Deduct what is but vanity or dress,
Or learning's luxury, or idleness ;
Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,
Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain ;
Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
Of all our vices have created arts ;
Then see how little the remaining sum,
Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come !

Two principles in human nature reign ;
Self-love, to urge, and reason, to restrain ;
Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,
Each works its end, to move or govern all :
And to their proper operation still
Ascribe all Good, to their improper, Ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul ;
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.
Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And, but for this, were active to no end :
Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot :
Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void,
Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principle requires ;
Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.
Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,
Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise.

Self-love, still stronger, as its objects nigh ;
Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie :
That sees immediate good by present sense ;
Reason, the future and the consequence.
Thicker than arguments, temptations throng,
At best more watchful this, but that more strong.
The action of the stronger to suspend,
Reason still use, to reason still attend.
Attention habit and experience gains ;
Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains.
Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
More studious to divide than to unite ;
And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,
With all the rash dexterity of wit.
Wits, just like fools, at war about a name,
Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.
Self-love and reason to one end aspire,
Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire ;
But greedy that, its object would devour,
This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r :
Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,
Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

Modes of self-love the passions we may call ;
'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all :
But since not ev'ry good we can divide,
And reason bids us for our own provide,
Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
List under Reason, and deserve her care ;
Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,
Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.

In lazy apathy let Stoics boast
Their virtue fix'd ; 'tis fix'd as in a frost :
Contracted all, retiring to the breast ;
But strength of mind is exercise, not rest :
The rising tempest puts in act the soul,
Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
Reason the card, but passion is the gale ;

Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind.

Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,
Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite :
These 'tis enough to temper and employ ;
But what composes man, can man destroy ?
Suffice that reason keep to nature's road,
Subject, compound them, follow her and God.
Love, hope, and joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,
Hate, fear, and grief, the family of pain,
These mixt with art, and to due bounds confin'd,
Make and maintain the balance of the mind :
The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife
Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes ;
And, when in act they cease, in prospect rise :
Present to grasp, and future still to find,
The whole employ of body and of mind.
All spread their charms, but charm not all alike ;
On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike ;
Hence diff'rent passions more or less inflame,
As strong or weak, the organs of the frame ;
And hence one master passion in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,
Receives the lurking principle of death ;
The young disease, that must subdue at length,
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength ;
So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
The mind's disease, its ruling passion came ;
Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
Soon flows to this, in body and in soul :
Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
Imagination plies her dang'rous art,
And pours it all upon the peccant part.
Nature its mother, habit is its nurse ;
Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse ;

Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r,
As heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sour.

We, wretched subjects tho' to lawful sway,
In this weak queen some fav'rite still obey :
Ah ! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
What can she more than tell us we are fools ?
Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend,
A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend !
Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade
The choice we make, or justify it made ;
Proud of an easy conquest all along,
She but removes weak passions for the strong :
So, when small humours gather to a gout,
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.

Yes, nature's road must ever be preferr'd ;
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard ;
'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,
And treat this passion more as friend than foe ;
A mightier pow'r the strong direction sends,
And sev'ral men impels to sev'ral ends :
Like varying winds by other passions tost,
This drives them constant to a certain coast.
Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,
Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease ;
Thro' life 'tis followed, ev'n at life's expence ;
The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
The monk's humility, the hero's pride,
All, all alike, find reason on their side.

Th' Eternal Art educing good from ill,
Grafts on this passion our best principle :
'Tis thus the mercury of man is fix'd,
Strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd ;
The dross cements what else were too refin'd,
And in one int'rest body acts with mind.

As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear ;
The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
Wild nature's vigour working at the root.

What crops of wit and honesty appear
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate or fear ! 18
See anger, zeal and fortitude supply ;
Ev'n av'rice, prudence ; sloth, philosophy ;
Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind ;
Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
Is emulation in the learn'd or brave ;
Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,
But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame.

Thus nature gives us (let it check our pride)
The virtue nearest to our vice allied :
Reason the byas turns to good from ill,
And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.
The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,
In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine :
The same ambition can destroy or save,
And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,
What shall divide ? The god within the mind.

Extremes in nature equal ends produce,
In man they join to some mysterious use ;
Tho' each by turns the other's bound invade,
As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,
And oft so mix, the diff'rence is too nice
Where ends the virtue, or begins the vice.

Fools ! who from hence into the notion fall,
That vice or virtue there is none at all.
If white and black blend, soften, and unite
A thousands ways, is there no black or white ?
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain ;
'Tis to mistake them costs the time and pain.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen ;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
But where th' extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed :
Ask where 's the North ? at York, 'tis on the Tweed ;

In Scotland, at the Orcades ; and there,
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
No creature owns it in the first degree,
But thinks his neighbour farther gone than he :
Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,
Or never feel the rage, or never own ;
What happier natures shrink at with affright,
The hard inhabitant contends is right.

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man must be,
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree ;
The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise ;
And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.
'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill ;
For, vice or virtue, self directs it still ;
Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal ;
But Heav'n's great view is one, and that the whole.
That counter-works each folly and caprice ;
That disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice ;
That happy frailties to all ranks apply'd,
Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,
Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
To kings presumption, and to crowds belief :
That virtue's ends from vanity can raise,
Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise ;
And build on wants, and on defects of mind,
The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.

Heav'n forming each on other to depend,
A master, or a servant, or a friend,
Bids each on other for assistance call,
'Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all
Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
The common int'rest, or endear the tie.
To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,
Each home-felt joy that life inherits here ;
Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,
Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign ;
Taught half by reason, half by mere decay,
To welcome death, and calmly pass away.

Whate'er the passion—knowledge, fame, or pelf,
Not one will change his neighbour with himself.
The learn'd is happy nature to exp'ore,
The fool is happy that he knows no more ;
The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n,
The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.
See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
The sot a hero, lunatic a king ;
The starving chemist in his golden views
Supremely blest, the poet in his muse.
See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,
And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend :
See some fit passion ev'ry age supply,
Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,
Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw :
Some livelier play-thing gives his youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite :
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,
And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age :
Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before ;
'Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.

Mean-while opinion gilds with varying rays
Those painted clouds that beautify our days ;
Each want of happiness by hope supply'd,
And each vacuity of sense by pride :
These build as fast as knowledge can destroy ;
In folly's cup still laughs the bubble joy ;
One prospect lost, another still we gain ;
And not a vanity is giv'n in vain ;
Ev'n mean self-love becomes, by force divine,
The scale to measure others' wants by thine.
See ! and confess one comfort still must rise ;
'Tis this, Tho' man 's a fool, yet God is wise.

EPISTLE III

ARGUMENT

Of the nature and state of man with respect to society.

I. The whole universe one system of society, 7. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another, 27. The happiness of animals mutual, 49. II. Reason or instinct operate alike to the good of each individual, 79. III. Reason or instinct operate also to society in all animals, 109. How far society carried by instinct, 115. How much farther by Reason, 131. IV. Of that which is called the state of nature, 143. Reason instructed by instinct in the invention of arts, 169, and in the forms of society, 179. V. Origin of political societies, 199. Origin of monarchy, 207. VI. Patriarchal government, 212. Origin of true religion and government, from the same principle of love, 231. Origin of superstition and tyranny, from the same principle of fear, 241. The influence of self-love operating to the social and public good, 269. Restoration of true religion and gevernment on their first principle, 283. Mixt government, 288. Various forms of each, and the true end of all, 303.

EPISTLE III

Here then we rest; 'The Universal Cause
Acts to one end, but acts by various laws.'
In all the madness of superfluous health,
The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,
Let this great truth be present night and day;
But most be present, if we preach or pray.

Look round our world; behold the chain of love
Combining all below and all above.
See plastic nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend,
Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.
See matter next, with various life endued,
Press to one centre still, the gen'ral good.
See dying vegetables life sustain,
See life dissolving vegetate again:
All forms that perish other forms supply,
(By turns we catch the vital breath, and die)
Like bubbles on the sea of matter born,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return.
Nothing is foreign; parts relate to whole;
One all-extending, all-preserving soul
Connects each being, greatest with the least;
Made beast in aid of man, and man of beast;
All serv'd, all serving: nothing stands alone;
The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

Has God, thou fool? work'd solely for thy good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn:
Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.

Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat ?
Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.
The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain ?
The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain.
Thine the full harvest of the golden year ?
Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer :
The hog, that plows not, nor obeys thy call,
Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

Know, nature's children all divide her care ;
The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.
While man exclaims, 'See all things for my use !'
'See man for mine !' replies a pamper'd goose :
And just as short of reason he must fall,
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the pow'rful still the weak control ;
Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole :
Nature that tyrant checks ; he only knows,
And helps, another creature's wants and woes.
Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,
Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove ?
Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings ?
Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings ?
Man cares for all ; to birds he gives his woods,
To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods ;
For some his int'rest prompts him to provide,
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride :
All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy
Th' extensive blessing of his luxury.
That very life his learned hunger craves,
He saves from famine, from the savage saves ;
Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,
And, till he ends the being, makes it blest :
Which sees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,
Than favour'd man by touch ethereal slain.
The creature had his feast of life before ;
Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er !

To each unthinking being, Heav'n a friend,
Gives not the useless knowledge of its end :
To man imparts it ; but with such a view,
As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too :
The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,
Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.
Great standing miracle ! that Heav'n assign'd
Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

Whether with reason, or with instinct blest,
Know, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best ;
To bliss alike by that direction tend,
And find the means proportion'd to their end..
Say, where full instinct is th' unerring guide,
What Pope or Council can they need beside ?
Reason, however able, cool at best,
Cares not for service, or but serves when prest,
Stays 'till we call, and then not often near ;
But honest instinct comes a volunteer,
Sure never to o'er-shoot, but just to hit ;
While still too wide or short is human wit ;
Sure by quick nature happiness to gain,
Which heavier reason labours at in vain.
This too serves always, reason never long ;
One must go right, the other may go wrong.
See then the acting and comparing pow'rs
One in their nature, which are two in ours ;
And reason raise o'er instinct as you can,
In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis man.

Who taught the nations of the field and flood
To shun their poison, and to choose their food ?
Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand ?
Who made the spider parallels design,
Sure as De Moivre, without rule or line ?
Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore
Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before ?
Who calls the council, states the certain day,
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way ?

God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds :
But as he fram'd a whole the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness :
So from the first, eternal order ran,
And creature link'd to creature, man to man.
Whate'er of life all-quick'ning ether keeps,
Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,
Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.
Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace :
They love themselves, a third time, in their race.
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend ;
The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,
There stops the instinct, and there ends the care ;
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
Another love succeeds, another race.
A longer care man's helpless kind demands ;
That longer care contracts more lasting bands :
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the int'rest and the love :
With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn ;
Each virtue in each passion takes its turn ;
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
That graft benevolence on charities.
Still as one brood, and as another rose,
These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those :
The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect man,
Saw helpless him from whom their life began :
Mem'ry and forecast just returns engage,
That pointed back to youth, this on to age ;
While pleasure, gratitude, and hope combin'd,
Still spread the int'rest and preserv'd the kind.
Nor think, in nature's state they blindly trod ;
The state of nature was the reign of God :

Self-love and social at her birth began,
Union the bond of all things, and of man.
Pride then was not ; nor arts, that pride to aid ;
Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade ;
The same his table, and the same his bed ;
No murder cloth'd him, and no murder fed.
In the same temple, the resounding wood,
All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God :
The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,
Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest :
Heav'n's attribute was universal care,
And man's prerogative, to rule, but spare.
Ah ! how unlike the man of times to come !
Of half that live the butcher and the tomb ;
Who, foe to nature, hears the gen'ral groan,
Murders their species, and betrays his own.
But just disease to luxury succeeds,
And ev'ry death its own avenger breeds ;
The fury-passions from that blood began,
And turn'd on man a fiercer savage, man.

See him from nature rising slow to art !
To copy instinct then was reason's part ;
Thus then to man the voice of nature spake,—
'Go, from the creatures thy instructions take :
Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield ;
Learn from the beasts the physic of the field ;
Thy arts of building from the bee receive ;
Learn of the mole to plow, the worm to weave ;
Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
Here too all forms of social union find,
And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind :
Here subterranean works and cities see ;
There towns aerial on the waving tree.
Learn each small people's genius, policies,
The ants' republic, and the realm of bees ;
How those in common all their wealth bestow,
And anarchy without confusion know ;

And these for ever, tho' a monarch reign,
Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.
Mark what unvaried laws preserve each state,
Laws wise as nature, and as fix'd as fate.
In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,
Entangle justice in her net of law,
And right, too rigid, harden into wrong ;
Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.
Yet go ! and thus o'er all the creatures sway,
Thus let the wiser make the rest obey ;
And for those arts mere instinct could afford,
Be crown'd as monarchs, or as gods ador'd.'
Great nature spoke ; observant man obey'd ;
Cities were built, societies were made :
Here rose one little state ; another near
Grew by like means, and join'd thro' love or fear.
Did here the trees with ruddier burdens bend,
And there the streams in purer rills descend ?
What war could ravish, commerce could bestow,
And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.
Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,
When love was liberty, and nature law.
Thus states were form'd ; the name of king unknown,
'Till common int'rest plac'd the sway in one.
'Twas virtue only (or in arts or arms,
Diffusing blessings, or averting harms)
The same which in a sire the sons obey'd,
A prince the father of a people made.
'Till then, by nature crown'd, each patriarch sate,
King, priest, and parent, of his growing state ;
On him, their second Providence, they hung,
Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,
Taught to command the fire, control the flood,
Draw forth the monsters of th' abyss profound,
Or fetch th' aerial eagle to the ground,
'Till drooping, sick'ning, dying they began
Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as man :
Then, looking up from sire to sire, explor'd
One great first Father, and that first ador'd ;

Or plain tradition that this All begun,
Convey'd unbroken faith from sire to son ;
The worker from the work distinct was known,
And simple reason never sought but one.
Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light,
Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right ;
To virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,
And own'd a father when he own'd a God.
Love all the faith, and all th' allegiance then ;
For nature knew no right divine in men,
No ill could fear in God ; and understood
A sov'reign being, but a sov'reign good.
True faith, true policy, united ran,
That was but love of God, and this of man.
Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms undone,
Th' enormous faith of many made for one ;
That proud exception to all nature's laws,
T' invert the world, and counter-work its cause ?
Force first made conquest, and that conquest, law ;
'Till superstition taught the tyrant awe,
Then shar'd the tyranny, then lent it aid,
And gods of conqu'rors, slaves of subjects made :
She, midst the light'ning's blaze, and thunder's sound,
When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd the ground,
She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,
To pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they :
She, from the rending earth, and bursting skies,
Saw gods descend, and fiends infernal rise :
Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes ;
Fear made her devils, and weak hope her gods ;
Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust ;
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe.
Zeal then, not charity, became the guide ;
And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.
Then sacred seem'd th' ethereal vault no more ;
Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore :
Then first the flamen tasted living food ;
Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood ;

With heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,
And play'd the god an engine on his foe.

So drives self-love, thro' just, and thro' unjust,
To one man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust :
The same self-love, in all, becomes the cause
Of what restrains him, government and laws.
For what one likes, if others like as well,
What serves one will, when many wills rebel ?
How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake,
A weaker may surprise, a stronger take ?
His safety must his liberty restrain :
All join to guard what each desires to gain.
Forc'd into virtue thus by self-defence,
Ev'n kings learn'd justice and benevolence :
Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,
And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then the studious head or gen'rous mind,
Follow'r of God, or friend of human-kind,
Poet or patriot, rose but to restore
The faith and moral nature gave before ;
Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new,
If not God's image, yet his shadow drew :
Taught pow'r's due use to people and to kings,
Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings,
The less, or greater, set so justly true,
That touching one must strike the other too ;
'Till jarring int'rests of themselves create
Th' according music of a well-mix'd state.
Such is the world's great harmony, that springs
From order, union, full consent of things ;
Where small and great, where weak and mighty, made
To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade ;
More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,
And in proportion as it blesses blest ;
Draw to one point, and to one centre bring
Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king.

For forms of government let fools contest ;
Whate'er is best administer'd is best ;

For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight ;
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right :
In faith and hope the world will disagree,
But all mankind's ooncern is charity :
All must be false that thwart this one great end ;
And all of God, that bless mankind, or mend.

Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives ;
The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.
On their own axis as the planets run,
Yet make at once their circle round the sun ;
So two consistent motions act the soul ;
And one regards itself, and one the whole.

Thus God and nature link'd the gen'ral frame,
And bade self-love and social be the same.

EPISTLE IV

ARGUMENT

Of the nature and state of man with respect to happiness.

I. False notions of happiness, philosophical and popular, answered, 19. II. It is the end of all men, and attainable by all, 29. God intends happiness to be equal; and to be so, it must be social, since all particular happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular laws, 35. As it is necessary for order, and the peace and welfare of society, that external goods should be unequal, happiness is not made to consist in these, 49. But notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by providence, by the two passions of hope and fear, 67. III. What the happiness of individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good man has here the advantage, 77. The error of imputing to virtue what are only the calamities of nature, or of fortune, 93. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favour of particulars, 121. V. That we are not judges who are good; but that whoever they are, they must be happiest, 131. VI. That external goods are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of virtue, 167. That even these can make no man happy without virtue: Instanced in riches, 185. Honours, 193. Nobility, 205. Greatness, 217. Fame, 237. Superior talents, 259. With pictures of human infelicity in men possessed of them all, 269. VII. That virtue only constitutes a happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, 309. That the perfection of virtue and happiness consists in a conformity to the order of Providence here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter, 326.

EPISTLE IV

Oh happiness ! our being's end and aim !
Good, pleasure, ease, content ? whate'er thy name :
That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die,
Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,
O'er-look'd, seen double, by the fool, and wise.
Plant of celestial seed ! if dropt below,
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow ?
Fair op'ning to some court's propitious shine,
Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine ?
Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field ?
Where grows ! where grows it not ? If vain our toil,
We ought to blame the culture, not the soil :
Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere,
'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where :
'Tis never to be bought, but always free,
And fled from monarchs, St. John ! dwells with thee.

Ask of the learn'd the way ! The learn'd are blind ;
This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind ;
Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,
Those call it pleasure, and contentment these ;
Some sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain ;
Some swell'd to gods, confess ev'n virtue vain ;
Or indolent, to each extreme they fall,
To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less
Than this, that happiness is happiness ?

Take nature's path, and mad opinion's leave ;
All states can reach it, and all heads conceive ;
Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell ;
There needs but thinking right, and meaning well ;

And mourn our various portions as we please,
Equal is common sense, and common ease.

Remember, man, the Universal Cause
Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws ;
And makes what happiness we justly call
Subsist not in the good of one, but all.
There's not a blessing individuals find,
But some way leans and hearkens to the kind :
No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,
No cavern'd hermit, rests self-satisfied :
Who most to shun or hate mankind pretend,
Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend :
Abstract what others feel, what others think,
All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink :
Each has his share ; and who would more obtain,
Shall find the pleasure pays not half the pain.

Order is heav'n's first law ; and this confest,
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,
More rich, more wise ; but who infers from hence
That such are happier, shocks all common sense.
Heav'n to mankind impartial we confess,
If all are equal in their happiness :
But mutual wants this happiness increase ;
All natures's diff'rence keeps all nature's peace.
Condition, circumstance is not the thing ;
Bliss is the same in subject or in king,
In who obtain defence, or who defend,
In him who is, or him who finds a friend :
Heav'n breathes thro' ev'ry member of the whole
One common blessing, as one common soul.
But fortune's gifts if each alike possest,
And each were equal, must not all contest ?
If then to all men happiness was meant,
God in externals could not place content.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those ;
But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,
While those are plac'd in hope, and these in fear :

Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,
But future views of better, or of worse.
Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies?
Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys,
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.
Know, all the good that individuals find,
Or God and nature meant to mere mankind,
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, health, peace, and competence.
But health consists with temperance alone;
And peace, oh virtue! peace is all thy own.
The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain;
But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.
Say, in pursuit of profit or delight,
Who risk the most, that take wrong means, or right?
Of vice or virtue, whether blest or curst,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?
Count all th' advantage prosp'rous vice attains,
'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains:
And grant the bad what happiness they would,
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.
Oh blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,
Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe!
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.
But fools the good alone unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all.
See Falkland dies, the virtuous and the just!
See god-like Turenne prostrate on the dust!
See Sidney bleeds amid the martial strife!
Was this their virtue, or contempt of life?
Say, was it virtue, more tho' heav'n ne'er gave,
Lamented Digby! sunk thee to the grave?
Tell me, if virtue made the son expire,
Why, full of days and honour, lives the sire?
Why drew Marseilles' good bishop purer breath,
When nature sicken'd, and each gale was death?
Or why so long (in life if long can be)
Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me?

What makes all physical or moral ill ?
There deviates nature, and here wanders will.
God sends not ill ; if rightly understood,
Or partial ill is universal good,
Or change admits, or nature lets it fall,
Short, and but rare, 'till man improv'd it all.
We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain
That righteous Abel was destroyed by Cain,
As that the virtuous son is ill at ease,
When his lewd father gave the dire disease.
Think we, like some weak prince, th' Eternal Cause
Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws ?

Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
Forget to thunder, and recall her fires ?
On air or sea new motions be imprest,
Oh blameless Bethel ! to relieve thy breast ?
When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
Shall gravitation cease, if you go by ?
Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,
For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall ?
But still this world (so fitted for the knave)
Contents us not. A better shall we have ?
A kingdom of the just then let it be :
But first consider how those just agree.
The good must merit God's peculiar care ;
But who, but God, can tell us who they are ?
One thinks on Calvin heav'n's own spirit fell ;
Another deems him instrument of hell ;
If Calvin feel heav'n's blessing, or its rod,
This cries there is, and that, there is no God.
What shocks one part will edify the rest,
Nor with one system can they all be blest.
The very best will variously incline,
And what rewards your virtue, punish mine,
Whatever is, is right. This world, 'tis true,
Was made for Cæsar—but for Titus too ;
And which more blest, who chain'd his country, say,
Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day ?

'But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed.'
What then ? is the reward of virtue bread ?
That vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil ;
The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil,
The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,
Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.
The good man may be weak, be indolent ;
Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.
But grant him riches, your demand is o'er ?
'No, shall the good want health, the good want power ?'
Add health and pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing,
'Why bounded pow'r ? why private ? why no king ?
Nay, why external for internal giv'n ?
Why is not man a god, and earth a heav'n ?'
Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive
God gives enough, while He has more to give :
Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand ;
Say, at what part of nature will they stand ?

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy,
Is virtue's prize : a better would you fix ?
Then give humility a coach and six,
Justice a conq'ror's sword, or truth a gown,
Or public spirit its great cure, a crown.
Weak, foolish man ! will Heav'n reward us there
With the same trash mad mortals wish for here ?
The boy and man an individual makes,
Yet sigh'st thou now for apples or for cakes ?
Go, like the Indian, in another life
Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife,
As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,
As toys and empires, for a god-like mind.
Rewards, that either would to virtue bring
No joy, or be destructive of the thing :
How oft by these at sixty are undone
The virtues of a saint at twenty-one !

To whom can riches give repute, or trust,
Content, or pleasure, but the good and just ?
Judges and senates have been bought for gold,
Esteem and love were never to be sold.

Oh fool ! to think God hates the worthy mind,
The lover and the love of human-kind,
Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.

Honour and shame from no condition rise ;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
Fortune in men has some small diff'rence made,
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade ;
The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.
'What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl !'
I'll tell you, friend : a wise man and a fool.
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,
Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow ;
The rest is all but leather or prunella.

Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,
That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings :
Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece :
But by your fathers' worth if yours you rate,
Count me those only who were good and great.
Go ! if your ancient, but ignoble blood
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,
Go ! and pretend your family is young ;
Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.
What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards ?
Alas ! not all the blood of all the Howards.

Look next on greatness ; say where greatness lies.
'Where, but among the heroes and the wise ?'
Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede ;
The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find
Or make, an enemy of all mankind !
Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,
Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.
No less alike the politic and wise ;
All sly slow things, with circumspective eyes :

Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,
Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.
But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat;
'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great:
Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,
Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.
Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,
Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed
Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.

What's fame? a fancied life in others' breath,
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.
Just what you hear, you have, and what 's unknown
The same (my Lord) if Tully's, or your own.
All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes or friends;
To all beside as much an empty shade
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead;
Alike, or when, or where they shone, or shine,
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.
A wit 's a feather, and a chief a rod;
An honest man 's the noblest work of God.
Fame but from death a villain's name can save,
As justice tears his body from the grave;
When what t' oblivion better were resign'd,
Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.
All fame is foreign, but of true desert;
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:
One self approving hour whole years out-weighs
Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;
And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In parts superior what advantage lies?
Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise?
'Tis but to know how little can be known;
To see all others' faults, and feel our own:
Condemn'd in bus'ness or in arts to drudge,
Without a second, or without a judge:

Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land?
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
Painful pre-eminence ! yourself to view
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account;
Make fair deductions : see to what they 'mount :
How much of other each is sure to cost;
How each for other oft is wholly lost;
How inconsistent greater goods with these;
How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease :
Think, and if still the things thy envy call,
Say, would'st thou be the man to whom they fall?
To sigh for ribbons if thou art so silly,
Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.
Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life?
Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife.
If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind :
Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,
See Cromwell, damn'd to everlasting fame !
If all, united, thy ambition call,
From ancient story learn to scorn them all.
There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd and great,
See the false scale of happiness complete !
In hearts of kings, or arms of queens who lay,
How happy those to ruin, these betray !
Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose;
In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,
And all that rais'd the hero sunk the man :
Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold,
But stain'd with blood, or ill exchang'd for gold :
Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.
Oh wealth ill-fated ! which no act of fame
E'er taught to shine, or sanctified from shame !
What greater bliss attends their close of life?
Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
The trophied arches, storied halls invade,
And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.

Alas ! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray,
Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day ;
The whole amount of that enormous fame,
A tale, that blends their glory with their shame !

Know then this truth, enough for man to know,
Virtue alone is happiness below.
The only point where human bliss stands still,
And tastes the good without the fall to ill ;
Where only merit constant pay receives,
Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives ;
The joy unequal'd, if its end it gain,
And if it lose, attended with no pain :
Without satiety, tho' e'er so bless'd,
And but more relish'd as the more distress'd :
The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,
Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears :
Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,
For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd ;
Never elated, while one man's oppress'd ;
Never dejected, while another's bless'd ;
And where no wants, no wishes can remain,
Since but to wish more virtue is to gain.

See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow !
Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know :
Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
The bad must miss, the good, untaught, will find ;
Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through nature up to nature's God :
Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine ;
Sees, that no being any bliss can know,
But touches some above, and some below ;
Learns, from this union of the rising whole,
The first, last purpose of the human soul ;
And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
All end, in love of God, and love of man.
For him alone, hope leads from goal to goal,
And opens still, and opens on his soul ;
'Till lengthen'd on to faith, and unconfin'd,
It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.
He sees, why nature plants in man alone
Hope of known bliss, and faith in bliss unknown :

(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find ;)
Wise is her present ; she connects in this
His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss ;
At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.
Is this too little for the boundless heart ?
Extend it, let thy enemies have part :
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence :
Happier as kinder, in what'er degree,
And height of bliss but height of charity.

God loves from whole to parts : but human soul
Must rise from individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads ;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace ;
His country next ; and next all human race ;
Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind
Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind ;
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my friend, my genius, come along ;
Oh master of the poet, and the song !
And while the muse now stoops, or now ascends,
To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,
Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
To fall with dignity, with temper rise ;
Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer
From grave to gay, from lively to severe ;
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
Intent to reason, or polite to please.
Oh ! while along the stream of time thy name
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame ;
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale ?

When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
Shall then this verse to future age pretend
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend ?
That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart ;
For wit's false mirror held up nature's light ;
Shew'd erring pride, whatever is, is right ;
That reason, passion, answer one great aim ;
That true self-love and social are the same ;
That virtue only makes our bliss below ;
And all our knowledge is, ourselves to know.

EPISTLE I

ARGUMENT

This epistle deals with the nature and the position of man in relation to the universe.

(i) Man can judge only through his own system, because he is totally ignorant about the systems of others.

(ii) Man is not really imperfect ; he is suitable for the place and rank he occupies in the order of creation ; only he does not know his end.

(iii) Man is happy only because he does not know what is going to happen to him in future ; naturally he hopes for the best, and is happy in expectation of joy.

(iv) Man's misery is due to his straining for more knowledge and for greater perfection in the world.

(v) Out of a false sense of pride, man criticises God—His imperfections and injustice.

(vi) He wrongly thinks, he is responsible for the creation, and perfection in the real sense can be attained by him in the moral world.

(vii) Man is unreasonable because he complains against God's doings.

(viii) Man will surely be unhappy, if he acquires some of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree.

(ix) The same order of sensual and mental faculties prevails all over the world. The gradation of sense is—instinct, thought, and reason. Reason alone can help all the faculties alike.

(x) To what can man be subordinate to the greneral law of the universe.

(xi) In order to be really happy, man should resign himself completely to God's wishes for his present and future happiness. This absolute submission presupposes giving up all pride and self-love.

EPISTLE I

PARAPHRASE

Lines 1–8. O, my St. John! Get up, leave all small and insignificant things of life to those petty people who are of low ambition in life. In life, there is no other scope than merely looking about and await death. Let us, therefore, wander about freely and discuss things regarding man in relation to the universe. Life is a practical puzzle with intricate terms. But it has a plan of its own. These trees and plants, weeds and flowers grow wherever they like—without any order. Or it may be a garden where delicious fruits grow, but people do not have the courage to pluck them.

9–16. Let you and me walk over this broad and spacious field of life. Some of the views are open to the view others are hidden from like covert fields. Let us explore the hidden ways of life some on the plain, others on the tops of hills difficult to scale. Let us try to examine those who blindly creep along the ways of life without any aim or mission or those who try to rise high in life without any ulterior object. Observe and examine the ways along which nature works, hunt down the mistakes and vices wherever they are discernible, mark carefully the changes in manners, be merry whenever possible and be lenient wherever practicable. But all through, the aim should be to justify the ways in which God deals with men on earth.

17–33. It is impossible to make any observation about God above or man below without having acquired perfect knowledge about them. We know little about man except that he is an inhabitant of this world. All our reasons and references must be drawn from this fact, for this is all that we know about him. That man who has got the power of looking through this vast immensity can realise how this universe is composed of many worlds of our type, how varied systems of living and manners prevail there, and how there are many such worlds as ours which revolve round—not our sun, but other suns like this. In other words, the universe is of inconceivable magnitude.

Every planet in the sky is inhabited by human beings. Those people only who know these facts can say why Heaven has made man as he is—why the world is of this type—how man are connected with one another, how some are dependent on others—how there are gradations in society, some are low, others high, but through all these varied forms, the same soul lives. Or perhaps it is more correct to say that each part contains the whole ; each of it is enlivened by divine fire.

34-42. Who binds all men together? Are all bound together in a single chain through man's own efforts, or is it God's doing to some end? Man is extremely proud and vain, if he thinks it is all due to his own power. He should apply reason to the question and try to find out why some of the men are so weak, so mean and absolutely unfit to see reality in things. If he is unable to find out why, he should ask mother Earth why oak trees are made so huge in size and so strong that they are able to protect the small plants growing under them. Or he may even ask the sky, bright like silver, why the Sun is so big as that, and his companions, that is, the stars and other planets are so small in comparison. (Or why Jupiter is so big in comparison with its four satellites).

43-50. If it is admitted that the wisest portion of the creation must be the best among the prevailing systems of the world, where all must be full or not at all coherent, and where everything grows and attains prefection in due course, then it is plain that man (by virtue of his superior wisdom) must have a distinct and superior place in this universe. And the problem that arises at this stage is whether man has been rightly placed in relation to the universe.

51-68. With regard to man's actions, then, we cannot call any absolutely good or absolutely bad, because right and wrong are relative terms. Man is so made that he has to struggle on through life painfully, but what a pity, very few of such struggling men achieve success in life. Of divine action, a single one is able to produce the desired effect. Yet it produces secondary effect in some other sphere which is unknown to man. It influences some phenomenon on earth—and leads to some event. Human eyes are able to perceive just a part of it—and not the whole.

The mystery of divine actions is totally unknown to man Man sometimes checks the spirited horse from galloping fast;

he is driven slowly and squarely over the plains. The ox sometimes is engaged in breaking into powder the pieces of earth ; at other times, he falls victim to some other more powerful animal ; next time the same ox is chosen by the Egyptian as a "bull-God" and worshipped for twenty five years. Neither the horse nor the bull is able to understand why and how there are so many changes of fortune in his life—so many ups and downs in his career. God's ways will be understood only when the horse and the bull are able to follow the motive behind putting them to so many trials and tribulations in life. Man also will realise the use of his being, the meaning of his actions, his sufferings—why he was compelled to do certain things and why he was not allowed to do certain things in spite of his best desires and efforts—why he is a slave now—but is worshipped as a god the next moment.

69-90. Do not say that man is imperfect—and it is a fault of God in Heaven. Say, on the other hand, that man is as prefect as he can be or ought to be, this wisdom is just in accordance with his position in life. Man is so small a unit in the universe that the time he lives on earth is equal to just a moment in the universal clock, and the place he occupies is just as small as a spot. If man really wants to be perfect in a particular sphere, it is immaterial whether he becomes so here in this world or elsewhere, late or soon. Those who get bliss or perfection today are as good as those who got it about a thousand years ago.

God has deliberately hidden from man's eyes his destiny ; future is kept in darkness. He is able to see and know for himself that page of his *Book of Life* which deals with the present alone. Men know their state better than the animals (because they have better reasoning power), and spirits (heavenly beings) know better than men. That is why sorrows are graded in this life. The lamb goes on playing about merrily without knowing that he is going to be sacrificed the next hour. He would never have been merry at least, if he had known his fate. Till the last moment of his life, he goes on enjoying the grass and the flowers he gets as his meals ; he even licks affectionately the hand of that man who is to axe his head the next hour. (Thus ignorance is a bliss to him in this respect). It is a deliberate plan of God to keep man totally ignorant about his future. God is kind to him in

this respect. It is because of this ignorance that Man is able to fulfil his allotted duties in life. God is the supreme father of all. He looks upon all creatures with one eye—impartially, and without any concern. Big or small, all things are alike to Him. To God's eyes, the death of a great man or a sparrow is of equal value. The smallest imaginary body or the entire system of the world may come to ruin. But both produce the same effect on God. When the whole world crashes into ruin, it concerns God no more than when a bubble bursts in water.

91-98. Man's duty thus is to expect, with humility, any thing that God gives to him. Rise steadily with a heart full of suspense. Worship God and await the arrival of Death who can teach you the best of lessons. You are not to know what joys are in store for you after death. That is why the expectation of that unknown joy is like a blessing to man. Man lives by hope, and he always gets a kind of consolation in the expectation of future happiness. The present, thus, is never a happy state to any human being. He always places his happy period in the future. As soon as that future slides back into the present, he is disppointed not to find in it the expected joy. But, without being depressed, he once again starts dreaming of happiness in the future to follow. Thus the hope of happiness, which never dies, is really a bliss in human life. Thus human soul becomes restless when it fails to get joy in the present ; it starts wandering in space without restraint in expectation of that joy which it always places in the future.

99-112. Just look at the poor Indian. Not being properly educated, his mind is full of superstitions. He sees God in clouds or hears him in the wind. As he never learnt science (knowledge), his soul could never expect to reach the Milky Way where all noble souls go after death. Yet his simple and unsophisticated nature has given him a simple faith ; he believes that Heaven is somewhere behind the hill-tops covered with snow. He believes that there is a world of comfort in the depth of the forest, there is an island of joy somewhere in the middle of the ocean—where slaves are repatriated to their native land, and they enjoy rest without any cruel treatment from their wicked masters—where Christians are not so money-minded as they are here in this world. The poor Indian is content with simple things ; he does not expect any miracle to take place in life. He does expect the patronage of an

angel ; nor does he think a seraph will ever come to him holding a burning coal with the tongs to purge him of his iniquity and sins. His ambition is meek and low. He feels, he will be happy because he will live under the sky with his masters or owners, and his faithful dog will keep company with him.

113-130. Those of you who consider yourselves wise may form your opinion against God according to your wisdom. You may even try to find out the imperfections of God. You may even call Him partial and say, here He has given too little, and there he has given too much. you may even say that God destroys all his creatures for more sport or only to satisfy His taste or liking. Whenever you are unhappy or miserable, call God unjust. If man is not satisfied with the care God takes of him, if he does not believe that he can be perfect on earth—and immortal in Heaven, let him take away from the hand of God the sceptre or the royal rod and the standard of justice ; let him re-judge God's justice, and try to rule over God himself.

Man's mistake lies in his pride ; he is proud of his wisdom, and boasts of his reasoning power. Out of a false sense of vanity, man outsteps his limits, and thinks himself equal to God, and aims at occupying God's sacred place. Angels fell from Heaven because they aspired to be Gods ; in the same way men are trying to be angels ; they are trying to rebel against God's order and creation. Hence they, too, must fall like the angels. For those who try to rebel against the existing laws of order sin against the eternal cause, the cause of God.

131-140. Man is essentially self-centred ; he looks at everything from his own individual angle. Ask him why the heavenly bodies (such as the Sun, the Moon and the Stars) shine. Ask him why the Earth is there. Man, the egoist, man, who understand his own point of view alone, will atonce say, they are all for me. For me alone nature is kind enough to use his beneficent power ; plants grow, flowers bloom—only for my sake. The grapes are filled with sweet juice, the rose with perfume and dew. The earth produces a thousand other treasures for my sake alone. Water-springs gush out just to give me health ; the waves of the sea roll on for the sake of bringing me comfort ; the Sun rises in the sky only to give me light so that I may wake up from sleep. The earth is meant

for me to stand on; it is my footstool; the sky has been provided as a covering over my head."

141-164. But nature does not err from this gracious end. The burning heat of the Sun parches many to death; earthquakes take a large toll of human lives; tempests bury towns and cause indescribable ruin; sometimes an entire nation is buried deep in waters.

No, God or the cause of God does not act partially; nor does it keep individuals in view, when it acts. It acts in the interest of collective humanity. Exceptions are few and far between. If happiness be the end of life, then it must be said that nature has not been directing him properly. Pursuit of happiness requires a constant course of showers and sunshine as also the strong determination of man. For the attainment of happiness what is required is eternal spring and a cloudless sky. At the same time, man by nature should be temperate, calm and wise. If nature favours man, and does not bring in any calamity on earth, why then, Caesar Borgia, the son of Pope Alexander VI or Sergius Catiline the notorious Roman conspirator and traitor, will shower destruction on earth through their foul designs. The real way is known to none else but God whose hand forms the lightning, heaves the ocean and helps the storms to break out. It is He who makes men like Julius Caesar, the Roman general, ambitious, or creates circumstances under which Alexander, the King of Macedon is compelled to curse mankind. Our reason springs from pride. Moral things must be accounted for in the same way as natural things. Why do we charge Heaven with injustice in the case of some, while in the case of others, we acquit nature completely. In both cases, submission to the will of God means reasoning in the correct manner.

165-172. Better, if all the virtues, all harmonies, supposed to be there in Heaven, were here on earth. Better if the world's atmosphere had never been ruffled by atmosphere or hard wind, passion had not disturbed men's minds at all. But human mind is a reflection of nature. Like the conflicts among the elements of nature, there are conflicts in the minds of man. Thus passion is there in human mind as much as it is there in nature.

173-188. It is difficult to say what man actually desires. Sometimes he tries to rise upward to be nothing short of an angel. At other times, he looks downward and is terribly

grieved at heart, because he has not the strength of a bull or the fur of a bear. He swings between the attainment of physical and mental perfection. He tries to get for himself the combined strength of all creatures in the world. But to what use will he put all these powers ? Nature has been kind to every creature ; it has given power to every creature—ofcource, in moderation. The want or lack of one thing has been made up for by another. Those that do not have sufficient strength have got extra swiftness. Each has got proportionate power according to the need of circumstances. It can neither be increased nor lessened. So that each beast or each insect is happy in its own way. God cannot be unkind to man who is the most reasonable creature in the world. Will he not be pleased till he is blest with everything for himself?

189-206. Happiness or joy for man does not consist in thinking beyond his limit. He should not try to acquire for himself those things which his body and soul cannot hold or contain. Why is it that man does not possess the eye of a microscope through which he can look into the depth of things and through which small things look bigger ? The reason is simple. It is only because man is not a fly. What would have been the use, if men were given a keener eye sight and vision ? He would have observed the ordinary and insignificant things of the world very keenly—but would not have tried to understand God or Heaven so well. What would have been the use, if men were given a keener sense of touch. This extra sensitivity would have made him more alive or conscious of pain all over the body—pain in every pore. In that case man would have suffered immensely and even died of the sweet flavour and aroma of a rose. If our sense of hearing were a thousend times quicker than what it is now, the music supposed to be caused by the rotation of the earth would have sounded very hard to him and would have caused disturbance to his mind. The western wind which pleases him now with its soft and pleasing murmur, the mountain rivulets, the flow of which sounds so comforting to him now, would have bewildered him with their thundering noise. So, is not nature so good and wise in what she gives to man and in what she denies him ?

207-224. As the big range of creation goes on extending, man's power of the mind and the senses also goes on increasing. Mark how the sight becomes keener and more

powerful in those creatures that live in the green grass. The sight of the mole is so dim ; but the lynx is so keen-eyed. The lioness in the forests or in the deserts of Africa does not depend on the sense of smell, but on the sense of hearing. She tries to locate her prey by hearing the sound of its footsteps and not by its smell. The hunting dogs, on the other hand, are fully conscious of the smell of all those beasts and animals that are there in the forest. The sea-creatures and the birds that inhabit the spring forest—they all depend on their sense of hearing. The spider weaves an exquisitely fine thread, and it lives along that thread. The bee, that has a select life, has been given a wonderful power of discrimination. It can suck honey from poisonous herb without any harm to itself or any infection to the honey. This honey is so pure and healthy. Instinct also varies in the swine that grovels in the mud, when we compare ourselves with elephants that are not fully gifted with reason. What a fine distinction there is between the pig and the elephant on one hand, and reasonable man on the other. They are so near each other—yet so remote from each other.

225-232. Thoughts and memory are so closely allied together. Yet there is a thin partition that divides sense from thought. And those creatures, that stand between the bee on one hand and man at the other end, are so eager to join one or the other category. But the line of demarcation is so well defined and strong that it is impossible for them to cross it. Without these just gradations by nature amongst these worldly creatures, it would never have been possible to maintain the superiority of one species over the other. One class of animals or creatures could not have ruled over another, and man could not have been the lord over all the creatures of the earth. Is it not because of man's reason that he rules over all the rest of animals in the world ? It is through reason that man is able to hold all the powers of all the animals in himself.

233-246. Observe carefully how in all the elements of the earth—in ocean, on earth and in the air—inanimate matter is quickly bursting into life. How progressive life can be above *i. e.*, in the air ! How extensive life may be around—on this earth ! How deep life probes beneath the earth (creatures and plants that are there underneath the earth). Insubstantial nature (air), human beings, angels, beasts, birds, fish and insects

which are not visible to human eyes even through the glass—all try constantly to grow into the creator—and from there to mix with inanity. If men were to press on powers superior to him, he should remember, powers inferior to him may as well press on him. If one step in this graded system of creation is broken through carelessness or want of wisdom, the chain will be permanently broken and the whole creation completely destroyed. The whole of this nature is bound together in a close-linked chain. Whatever—howsoever small the chain, tenth or ten thousandth, that you break, the entire order of creation is bound to be adversely affected.

247-258. If each system connected so closely with the other tries to be independent of the control of the whole, there will be a complete breakdown in the order of things. Entire order will be topsy-turvy. For confusion in one link is bound to affect the entire chain. The Earth will fly away from its orbit or fixed spot ; The Sun and other Heavenly bodies will run helter and skelter across the sky creating confusion and danger of collision all around. The ruling angels will be thrown down from their regions, and they will fall one on the other. The different worlds in this universe will also tumble down one on the other. The entire foundation of Heaven will begin shaking, and nature will tremble before the throne of God. But when, why and how can such a terrible calamity come ? It can come only when there is pride, impurity, meanness and vileness in mankind.

259-280. What will happen if the foot which is meant for walking on the dust, or the hand which is meant for working hard, aspires to be the head ? What will happen, if the head, the eye or the ear repined to serve the ruling mind.? It is absurd for any part of the body to work for another. It is much more absurd for all the parts to try to usurp the place of the mind that rules the body.

All the limbs are simply parts of a great whole whose body is nature and whose soul is God. These parts, changed through circumustances, serve that divine order. They warm in the Sun, refresh in the breeze, glow in the stars, blossom in the trees, live through all life, extend through all space. They all act jointly and undivided—and are never exhausted or worn out after the operation. They vibrate through our limbs, our physical frames, through our souls as perfectly in a single hair

as in the heart. This divine entity is full and perfect. It runs through the high and low, the good and bad alike. It is there in a wicked man as also in a saraph who has been purged and purified of all sins by the touch of a burning coal on his tongue. This divine entity runs through all irrespective of shape or size, quality or quantity. It binds all together and makes them all equal.

281-294. Stop then, do not mention any imperfection in the order of the universe. Our real happiness depends on what we blame or find fault with. We should know our own limitations—our own powers, weaknesses, our blindness which God has given us. Submit without a grudge or complaint to God's will, and you are sure to get those things which you really deserve and your system and your powers can contain. You should have inplicit faith in the fact that your interests are quite safe in hands of that great power that disposes all—whether it is at the time of birth or at the time of death. All nature is an art which is not known to you. All accidents that happen on earth, all directions that things take in life are quite beyond your powers to perceives Whatever agreement or disagreement that takes place in thie universe—it is all beyond your comprehension. There may b evil that affects some ; there may be good that may affect all· There is only one great truth that shines above all this mystery— above all the vain pride of man, above man's wrong and misdirected reasoning powers, and it is

"Whatever is, is right."

There is nothing wrong with the existing order of things. Everything is at its right place, and no fault, howsoever minor, can be found with the divine order of the universe.

EPISTLE II

ARGUMENT

Of the nature and state of man in respect to himself, as an individual.

There are certain things in this world which are entirely under God's jurisdiction. It is foolishness on the part of man to pry into them. Man should be satisfied with studying himself—his nature and circumstances. He is superior to the animals, but inferior to God. He stands in between the two. He has many powers ; science has strengthened his hands a great deal. But he has many weaknesses too. His capacity, even though on the increase through the development of science, is still very limited.

There are two main principles that drive him forward in life—self-love and reason. Self-love urges him to work in life. Reason restrains or controls his actions. Both of them are equally necessary in life. Self-love is the cause of all action ; it acts on the soul ; reason strikes balance, and exercises a guiding principle. Though the end of self-love and reason is the same, self-love is a stronger passion.

Passion is selfish ; yet if its means be fair, it comes under reason, and reason must lift it up. Passions are of different kinds. But the master passion is so forceful that it sweeps all before it. Men are driven to different purposes in life, only because they have passions that are very forceful. It is not without a definite purpose that God has given man a master passion. It fixes his principle of guidance in life, and ascertains his virtue. Man's nature is compounded of virtue and vice. The limits are near, yet things are separate and evident.

What is the duty of reason ? Reason helps to turn man's evil nature into good. It reveals how hateful vice is ; and how easily man is tempted into its clutches. The ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections. All kinds of men—high, low or mediocre—have some kinds of

passions or the other. They are essential parts of life. Life cannot move without them. All progress in different aspects of life are due to these passions. Whether for individual or collective society, passions are necessary for forward movement.

Self-love also is equally necessary, because through divine force, it develops the power of measuring others, wants through it.

EPISTLE II

PARAPHRASE

Lines 1-18. It is man's first duty to try to know himself—who he is, wherefore he is here ; whereto he is to go ; What his main aim in life is, and so on. It will be a vain pride on his part, if he tries to know God; for God is unknowable. He should try to know himself by knowing mankind. "Know thyself"—that is the main object of man, and that is the essence of religious instructions of the world. Man is placed somewhere in between an animal and a god. He is not as wise as a god ; nor is he as ignorant and foolish as an animal. But his wisdom is mysterious—and his greatness is somewhat rude. He has so much knowledge that he always remains in doubt about what he is, and what he is to do. He is not strong enough at heart to be totally indifferint to happiness and sorrow as stoics are. He stands trembling in balance between action and inactivity. He does not know whether he should act and depend upon his own powers and take complete rest, sink into inactivity, and leave everything into the hands of God. He does not know which of the two is more important to him—whether the mind or the body. It appears that he is simply born to die—and his arguments with himself on all points are wrong. He remains totally ignorant, because whether he thinks too much or too little, his arguments are incorrect. In his mind, there is a jumbling or confusion of thoughts and passions. At times he puts his reason to wrong use ; at other time, he tries to drive out the wrong impressions from his mind, Man in a sense, is the master of all things of the world ; in another sense, he is subject or subordinate to everything in the world.

Man alone is, infact, the sole judge of truth in the world. But it is an irony that he follows the wrong unendingly. He is thus the glory, the jest and a puzzle of the world.

19-30. O, you wonderful creature accept the guidance of science. Go measure the earth, weigh air and observe for yourself the ebb and the flow of tides in the sea—in other words, gain knowledge by observing different natural pheno-

mena. Direct the moving bodies in the sky so that they may move along the correct path. Let him correct old time and let him regulate the Sun ; in other words, reform the old calendar in such a way that the ignorant men may not think that their days are lost.

Enter into Plato's writings and rise above this mundane earth to a region above all these sets of spheres in the sky. Reach that sphere in Heaven which is the best, most perfect and most beautiful.

O, man, if you cannot do that, go along the confusing ways of life which your followers trod along. And give up all reason in your useless effort to imitate the ways of God, just as priests in the east run in a circle, and foolishly try to imitate the ways of the Sun. Go, teach eternal wisdom as to how to rule—then sink within yourself, and foolishly think that you are as good as God himself.

31-42. Superior beings above the earth appreciated man's efforts to know nature, and they admired man's wisdom on earth, and being pleased, they sent men like Newton on earth who could discover nature's laws (of gravitation) exactly as man tries to reclaim ape into man.

Is it ever possible to fix one single movement of his mind whose laws bind together and regulate the movements of heavenly bodies ? He cannot explain his own beginning or end who has the power of seeing heavenly fire rise here and descend there. But what a pity it is ! Man's superior knowledge rises by stages, it acquires one art after another. But when man starts the great work of knowing himself, his passion destroys all his reason, and the entire work is destroyed.

43-52. Follow knowledge, then, modestly, and without pride. A man of knowledge develops pride in most cases. This pride should be discarded altogether. Take away from the man of knowledge all outward showiness, all idleness, all luxury of the body and mind that knowledge leads to. Let me be altogether free from the tendency that every wise man has of showing some tricks of the brain merely for the sake of pleasure or even for the sake of pain that adoption of skill involves. Cut off or delete altogether the superficial addition to arts that vicious parts often wise man makes. Then you will know how small the remaining portion of the knowledge is—which served the past ages and will continue to serve the future as well.

53-66. There are two main urges or impulses in human nature that are predominant. The first is the love for one's own self. This compels a man to action, leads him to argue with himself, and controls him in all other ways. This impulse of self-love cannot be called good ; it cannot be called bad. Each follows its own end. If it is rightly applied, it leads to good ; if improperly or wrongly applied, it leads to evil.

Self-love is the source of all human activity ; it acts on the soul. But reason compares onething with another and distinguishes good from bad. It dominates the entire life of man. Wihout self-love man is not capable of attending to any action tn life, and without reason, he cannot do anything usefully. Man is, thus, fixed like a plant at the fixed spot of self-love. Llke a plant, he also gets his food and sustenance from the soil of self-love. It is around, or on the bases of, self-love and reason that man develops like a tree, and then decays and dies. Or it shoots through the firmament like a shooting star destroying others—and, at the end, destroying himself.

67-80 The moving principle requires very great strength. Its task is active ; it impels and inspires man to activity. Reason has a comparatively quieter and calmer influence on life. Reason exercises a check on man, when self-love prompts him to go out of bounds. It advises man to think deeply before advancing on his way. Self-love becomes stronger and stronger as man comes nearer his aim ; but reason judges a thing from at a distance, and takes into consideration the future effect. Self-love is concerned with the achievement on the spot. But reason takes into account the future results of man's actions. Temptations become stronger than arguments. If one is more watchful, the other is more forceful. Reason exercises a check, and even self-love is brought under control.

81-92. Philosophers, whose minds are very complicated, teach their followers to study keenly and to split hairs even on minor questions. So that it has become their custom not to agree completely on any question. In their extreme eagerness to prove their wit or the strength of their mind, they create divergent opinions on such things as grace, virtue, sense and reason. Witty people foolishly quarrel among themselves about a particular term or a name which is either so full of meaning or is totally meaningless. Self-love and Reason have only one single aim in view : they work to avoid pain and get as much joy out of life as possible. But self-love always tries to save the

object of its love—that is self—from destruction. The mentality of egoists is like that of a person who wishes to enjoy the honey in a flower without hurting or bringing any harm on the flower. If rightly understood, Pleasure and Pain are in one sense our greatest evil, but in another sense, they are the greatest good.

93-100. Self-love expresses itself through passions. Self-love, whether really good or apparently good, has the power of moving all. But we cannot divide every good in the world. Reason, therefore,tries to turn every good to one's own advantage. Passions, are of course, selfish. But they can be brought under reason, if their means be fair. Those passions that can really lead to the development of reason have a nobler aim, and they raise mankind towards Heaven, and can be called virtue.

101-110. The stoic philosophers, that is, those who pretend to be totally unaffected by weal or woe, indifferently and passively find pleasure in saying that their virtue is fixed ; circumstances cannot alter it. They are unmoved by any outward happening. But the fixity of their virtue is like the fixity of frost which never moves this way or that. It is deeply condensed and therefore hits the heart and chokes the lungs. But mind grows in strength, when it is made to act and not when it is put altogether to rest.

Whenever there is a storm or a tempest, the soul of man atonce becomes active. In trying to breast the storm boldly, the soul of man may lose its wings or some other parts of it, but as a whole, the soul emerges stronger and healthier out of this violent struggle with the storm. This life of ours is like a vast ocean and men sail on this ocean of life in different ways. Reason alone can steer and guide the course of man along the voyage of life. But without passion, which provides the motive power of the voyage, and also sends wind upon the soil, the vessel of life would be stationary—like a painted ship on a painted ocean. Even God does not appear to man in calm weather ; He expresses Himself through the violence of the storm. In other words, man can never discover or realise God while enjoying a smooth-sailing in life. God reveals Himself to those alone who have got the courage to cross a violent and choppy sea, that is, face extreme misery.

111-122. Passions are important elements in the make-up of man. Apparently, of course, they are meant for fighting, yet, if suitably tempered, they can keep man in his progress. But it is certain that even though passion is a component part of

man, it can destroy man all right. Sufficient it is that reason always impels man to act in the natural way. Reason always advises man to follow Reason itself—and to follow God. Love, Hope and Joy belong to the family of Pleasure ; Hate, Fear and Grief belong to the family of Pain. These, when mixed harmoniously with art, and when they are restrained and kept within modest limits, help to maintain the balance of man's mind. Light and Shade, Happiness and Sorrow, if placed proportionately and harmoniously in life, add strength and colour to life itself.

123-132. Pleasures in this world are either handy—or are in sight. And when actually they cease, they continue to inspire us by appearing before our eyes as present in future. Human body and human mind are always engaged in grasping the present and finding out the future. All spread their charms, but all charms are not of the same kind. They strike different objects in different senses. Hence different kinds of passions inflame man more or less accordingly as he is weak or strong or his organs are susceptible or not. Hence the biggest passion or the master passion predominates over the rest of them, and swallows up or relegates to the background the less important passions.

133-148. Man becomes conscious of the principle of Death or End of life immediately after he takes his birth. The disease of youth, which is bound to come under control, grows with the growth of man. In the same way, the mind's disease, his ruling passion, also develops at about this time. Energy of the mind, which feeds the body, also spreads through his body and soul. This passion warms the heart and fills the head. As the mind opens with age and attends to its various functions, imagination also starts doing its sinful or guilty part by giving concrete images to certain things which have no shape. Nature is the mother of Imagination, and it is nursed by habit, and it is spoiled in course of time by mixing with wit, spirit and other faculties.

Reason helps it to become sharper, exactly as Sun's rays makes vinegar more sour.

149-160. We are miserable subjects because we always go by laws, and are controlled by the dictates of Reason, even though Reason becomes weaker under these circumstances. What more can Reason do except calling us fools, if she cannot lend us arms as well as rules of conduct in life. She simply teaches

to regret over our past follies and not to mend our mistakes of the past. She simply accuses us of our wrong conduct, but as a friend, she is helpless because she cannot mend our wrongs. She sometimes turns a pleader from a judge, and persuades us to make a choice and justifies it fully. She is proud of an easy conquest all along; she only removes weak passions for the strong. So when dampness or moisture gathers at a particular place and develop gout, it becomes easier for a doctor to drive it out.

161-174. Yes, nature's road should be preferred always by everybody. Everybody must follow nature in life. Here nature is no guide; She can simply act as a guard. She can simply set things right—and not root out the evil. She teaches man to treat passion more as a friend than as an enemy. A stronger power always sends man to different directions; different men are forced from within to follow different courses of life. Just as changing winds drive vessels to different coasts, in the same way passion also drives man towards a particular spot or coast of life. Man is persuaded to follow a course of life impelled by Power, Knowledge, Wealth or Fame; even love of ease plays an important part in life, for there are certain people who are impelled in their actions by a love of ease in life.

Passion prevails throughout life; at times it dominates life, and people are led to follow passion at the cost of life. The hard labour that a merchant performs, the idle life that a sage leads, the humility or lowliness that a monk exhibits and the pride that characterises a hero—they all have Reason on their side.

175-180. Nature's everlasting art of deducing good from every evil grafts on passion the best principle of life. Thus the principle in man's life becomes fixed like quick silver when heated (in a thermometer). Virtue becomes hardened when mixed with nature—and is naturally fixed. The baser metal helps to join together the refined things in nature, and thus the body and the mind act harmoniously with a single aim and purpose towards the common end.

181-194. Fruits are at times ungrateful, because they sometimes grow on mud heaps and not on those places where much care and labour have been spent by the gardener. In the same way, some sure virtues also grow at times out of violent passions animated by the strength of wild and untamed nature.

They may not be found in a well cultivated mind. Sometimes wonderful wit and honesty are found in persons who are easily irritable, obstinate and full of hatred and fear. Anger at times creates enthusiasm and strength of mind in a person. Greed at times gives wisdom ; laziness produces philosophy ; lust, refined through circumstances, changes into real love, which charms all women. All low class persons suffer more or less from envy ; but in the learned and brave people, this envy takes the shape of emulation.

It is difficult to name any virtue in man or woman which does not grow pride or shame.

195-204. As virtue generally grows out of pride, it may be said that nature has kept virtue and vice allied to each other. Reason has the power of changing the course of evil towards good. Under the influence of Reason, Nero, known for cruelty and licentious conduct, may change into Titus, another Roman emperor known throughout for his nobility and gentility. That wild enthusiasm which was hated and condemned in Catiline became divinely noble in the charms of Decius, the general who sacrificed his life for the victory of his troops—and Curtius who filled up the gap in the forum by jumping into it. Ambition is both a virtue and a vice. It can destroy or save ; it can turn a knave into a patriot, and vice-versa.

205-210. It is in this way that light and darkness, virtue and vice, are mixed up in our nature. What can distinguish one from the other ? It is God within our mind that can eliminate one from the other. Extremes in nature produce equal ends. In man, of course, these extremes join to some unknown and mysterious purposes. Just as in a beautiful picture, light and shade mix up almost inseparably, in the same way, virtue and vice also cross each other's limit so often ; they get mixed up so inseparably that their difference is hardly detected. It becomes difficult for man to find out which is virtue and which is vice.

211-230. Those are foolish who somehow or other develop the idea that there is in fact nothing like virtue or vice. White colour and black colour so often mix together inseparably, and it is not easy to distinguish them. But for that reason one cannot say that there is nothing like black or white in the world. Man should refer to his own heart, and the heart will

tell him which is virtue and which is vice. Those who fail to distinguish them correctly waste their time and suffer pain.

Vice, in fact, is a monster of fearful appearance. Man must see it with his own eyes just in order to develop hatred for it. still it should not be seen too frequently, because if man sees it so often, he will be familiar with it, develop pity for it, and then embrace it in life. If you ask somebody, which side is North, people standing at York will say, it is on the Tweed. From Scoland, people will say, it is at the Orcades. At Greenland, it will be at Zembla (desolate islands in Russia) or God knows where. No body admits it for himself. But everybody thinks that his neighbour has gone farther than he on the way to vice. Even those who lead a completely vicious life do not know how terribly vicious their lives are. Vicious people will try their best to support their own ways of living, even though these ways will be contemptuously looked down upon by the really virtuous.

231-248. Every man is either virtuous or vicious. Very few are extremely virtuous or vicious ; but all are virtuous or vicious in some degree. The fool and the wicked men are sometimes fair and sometimes wise. And even the best of them have at times got to do certain things which they hate. Each man, thus, is partly good and partly evil—or at times good, and at times evil. For virtue or vice directs man itself. Each individual seeks a separate goal. But Heaven's great view is one—and it is an unbreakable whole. This scheme of the universe or God counteracts each folly and whim of man. And it is in this way that every vice is counter-acted in the world. Some weaknesses are relatively good or bad in man. A particular weakness may appear shameful in an unmarried girl—but the same weakness may be a matter of pride for a married woman. A certain thing may appear fearful to a politician, but an indiscriminate action to the chief of the party. It may appear presumptuous to a king—but to common men, it may be a belief. Ends of virtue may even rise from vanity, for it seeks no interest, no reward. It likes only praise. On the basis of wants and certain defects of the mind, it can create joy and peace, and bring glory to mankind in general.

249-274. Heavenly order is so made that each has to depend on the other. Whether a master, a servant or a friend—each has to depend, in some respect or the other, on the

other. Each seeks the help of another till one man's weakness becomes the strength of another or even all of them. Wants, weaknessses, passions of one another bring the common men into a closer union. This is how love and friendship develop in society, and each home, living in close cooperation with others, feels the joy in life. But when this love declines, joy also declines, common interests disappear, man learns how to welcome death and pass away calmly.

But whatever individual passion, knowledge or wealth, nobody can be persuaded to change it with another. The learned man is happy because he can go deep into the intricacies of nature ; the fool is happy because he has no knowledge at all. The rich man is happy because he has abundance of things ; the poor man is contented with his own humble lot, and resigns himself happily to the care of God. The blind beggar dances happily ; the lame and the maimed sing ; a drunkard becomes a hero in life, a mad man at times occupies a throne. An alchemist by profession, who makes his both ends meet with very great difficulty, follows and worships the muse of poetry. In fact, man in any station of life, has some comfort or the other, and every man is proud of something in himself. Every age has a passion of its own, suited to the circumstances, and hope lives eternally in human breast ; it does not leave man's heart even when he dies.

275-294. Look at the child. Nature's law is such that the child is pleased with a slight noise and is interested in a straw. As he grows up, he develops interest in some other livelier things. He likes louder noise even though it be hollow or meaningless. As he becomes riper in years, worldly honours such as badges and titles attract him most. But when he grows old, his entire interest is concentrated on holy books. He is pleased with this hollow show of life, but he is tired of it now and falls asleep, as the poor play of life is over.

Meanwhile opinion assumes various colours regarding the good days that man passed in life. Each suffering in life is followed by a hope for betterment, and a vacant mind becomes proud of his achievements. Pride and passion build up things ; but knowledge destroys them all. In the cup of folly, joy laughs like a bubble.

When one hope is lost, we try to get hold of another, and no false pride is given up by man so easily. Egoism or self-

love, which is considered mean, becomes by divine force the yardstick to measure one man's wants with another's. By having a complete view of the entire situation, one sure conclusion is reached. It is this : Man may be a fool because he is vain, idle and wicked ; but, after all, God is wise.

EPISTLE III

ARGUMENT

Of the nature and state of Man with respect to Society.

The universe itself is one unified system of society. The universal cause acts towards one common and single purpose, but it is governed by several laws. Nothing in this universe is made entirely for its own sake ; nor is it made for another. Things are made because they are necessary in the universal order of things.

Animals get happiness on reciprocal basis ; each gives joy to the other. Instinct or Reason operate on the society of animals as well. Society is advanced a great deal by instinct. But Reason carries it farther still. State of Nature is allied with it. Instincts help Reason in the development of arts, as also in the formation of society.

What is the origin of political society ? What is the origin of monarchy or government by kings ? What is patriarchal government ? It is the principle of love that lies at the root of true religion and true kind of government. Fear, likewise, is at the root of all superstitions and tyranny of man on men, and man on animals.

In social life, self-love has a very important part to play. Social good and public good also depend a great deal on this important and general tendency of human heart. True Religion and real government should be restored to their first or primary principles. What is mixed government ? Various forms of all governments—and the true end of all forms of government.

EPISTLE III

PARAPHRASE

Lines 1-6. The main consideration is this then : The universal order of things act towards a common and single purpose, even though its actions are governed by various laws. Man may be proud of his excellent health ; his pride may be sky-high ; his wealth may be abundant. But this great truth he should bear in mind day and night.

7-26. Observe the world on all sides. See for yourself the chain of love that bind together all things, all creatures above or below. Plastic nature also works for this purpose. Each single atom of which the world is composed is eager to unite with the other. Each attracts the other, and is attracted in turn by the other, so that they all tend to embrace and join one another.

Matter is endowed with various kinds of life. But it presses on towards one centre, that is, general good of mankind or the world.

See how dry vegetables have life for fresh ones ; as one dies, another grows out of its ruin. Forms that perish supply life to the fresh ones. Each tries to catch life by turn, and then dies.

Like bubbles on the sea, matter takes its birth. They rise, they break, and then they mix up with the sea, *i. e.*, eternity. Nothing in this world is actually foreign. Each is a part of a whole—*i. e.*, *Soul* which extends over all and pervades all. It is this soul that connects each being irrespective of whether it is great or small. Nature thus created beasts for the help of mankind, and mankind for the help of the beasts. Nothing in this world is single or isolated. Every object serves—and is served by another. It is in this manner that the chain of creation continues, and nobody knows where it ends.

27-42. Man should not be foolish enough to think that God, the Creator, has been working only for his good. He is

concerned not simply with man's joy, his play, his dress and his food—in other words man's necessaries alone. God feeds the playful fawn through beautiful vegetation, so that man may enjoy its meat. But the lark goes up in the air and sings beautifully not merely for man's joy. He sings out of his inner joy. Joy gives melody to his voice ; he soars up out of joy alone. The linnet pours out his sweet melodies—not for man alone. He is impelled by the love in his own heart and abundant joy that nestles in his heart.

Man finds pleasure in riding a horse : but the horse also finds extreme joy in being ridden. The seeds of crops that scatter over the plains are not meant for man's enjoyment alone. Birds of heaven also enjoy them no less. The entire harvest that the lands yield is not man's alone. It justly belongs to those who work up to their production. Lower animals like hogs—ugly and useless creatures—who do not work for the improvement of the creation—are also provided sustenance by the kind Creator—who is the master of the universe.

43-70. We should realise that nature's children all share the love and tenderness of nature. That fur which warms a king now (in the form of a coat) formerly warmed the body of a bear. Man foolishly thinks : Everything in the creation is for his use. But a goose replies : "But, look here, man is created for my use." Similarly that person will be foolish and totally devoid of reason who thinks that all things in nature have been created for his own use, and not for the use of common humanity (or creation).

Of course, it is true that the strong still controls the weak. But man is the wisest and the most cruel part of the creation. Nature always puts a check on man's cruelties. He only knows the wants and woes of another creature. It is in the nature of the falcon to snap from above on the dove below. He shows no mercy there. Beautiful and bright coloured insects are devoured up by jay ; he shows no mercy towards them because they are beautiful to look at. In the same way, it is not in the nature of such a cruel bird as the hawk to stop preying on birds and hear the beautiful songs of the nightingale on a moonlit night.

It is man's nature to care for all. He has left the wood to the birds to fly freely about. Pastures have been left free to the beasts ; fish is left free to live and enjoy in flood water. Man does not interfere with their freedom. Man is interested in

providing facilities to other creatures. To some he gives freedom out of pleasure ; to others he gives freedom out of his pride—to prove them that he is superior to them.

All these animals feed on one vain patron, and enjoy the extensive blessing of his luxury. Man saves from the jaws of savages and also from famine that animal which he wistfully desires to enjoy as his own meal. He feasts on that animal in the long run ; but he saves it from the cruel clutches of others till the time he is not able to enjoy it himself. But man does not know that the creature he enjoyed as a feast had its feast prior to its death. In the same way, man will also meet his end immediately after his feast of life is over, for that is the way of the world.

71-78. God acts as friend to all those persons who are not gifted with reason or thinking power. He does not allow man to have any knowledge of his end, that is, Death. He gives this knowledge to man in such a way that man is on the one hand afraid of death, but on the other hand, he is also hopeful about it, because he believes, his divine life begins after death. The hour or exact time of death is hidden from everybody so that the fear of death may be far away. So that when Death actually comes very near, man is not able to see it, and thinks that it is far off. It is really strange that God gave to man, the only reasonable creature in the world, this turn or idea of Death.

79-108. All enjoy God-given power suitable for them on earth with the help of either Reason or instinct. Each gets God's grace according to merit, and it tends to the purpose for which he uses it. That man needs no guidance from Pope or his council who is guided in life by pure instinct because it can make no mistake. Reason, howsoever cool and unruffled it may be, is not eager to render service ; it serves only when it is pressed to serve. It stays with man as long as man sincerely desires it to stay, and then goes far away. But instinct is different in this respect. It comes to help man of its own accord. It volunteers help. It directs him to the purpose, though not compels him. And human wisdom is too wide or too short. This, of course, serves man at all times to gain happiness by quick nature. Heavier reason also works hard to gain this happiness, but is seldom successful. Human wit serves man at all times, but reason does not stay with him long. Sometimes reason and human wisdom may not completely agree ; one

may go right, the other may go wrong. Examine then the respective capacities of the two powers in man—Reason and human wisdom. Reason at times dominates instincts ; it overrules instinct at the direction of God.

99-108. Who taught the insects and other smaller animals of the world to avoid the poison of war and destruction and to concentrate on constructive work, so that they may enjoy their meals peacefully who made them take precautions against future dangers and to build shelters against natural calamities such as floods, storms, by utilising to their advantage the waves of the sea and the sand of the desert. Who taught the spider to design safe and artistic shelters like Abraham De Moivre, the emiment French Mathematician who taught his generation to guard against chances in life. Who taught the stork to explore fresh worlds and new heavens like Columbus ? Who is it that may be called responsible for fixing particular dates for particular incidents, calling the council, and even forming groups of men in battle array.

109-130. God gives particulas blessings to particular beings according to their needs—and in necesssary proportions. But He also framed the whole to bless the whole. He created an order in which mutual happiness depends on mutual wants and their satisfaction. Thus the natural order runs since the very beginning of creation. Animals are joined to animals, and men to men. They are all inter-dependant. The same nature feeds all creation—living in any pert of the universe—whether in the air, in the bed of the ocean on on earth. The same life flows through all created beings. Not man alone, all those creatures that are to be found in the sky, on earth or underneath an ocean, love themselves first. But each loves something more besides itself. Each sex desires to meet the other till the two are united into one. Their love does not come to an end by loving each other. They are keen on loving a third thing which they procreate through joint effort. They lavish their affection on this mutual charge—the young one or the child. The female creature nurse the young one—and the male creature saves it from external harm of all kinds. As soon as instincts develop in the young one, and it is able to take care of itself, all care is withdrawn from it by the parents, and lavished upon a fresh creation of theirs which they get

through a fresh embrace between them. Thus a race takes its birth.

131-146. But man is of a much more helpless kind than birds or animals of the forest. So man deserves a longer care on the part of the parents than what is bestowed by birds or animals on their young ones. And it is this longer care and deeper affection that forges a more lasting connection between the child and the parents. Thoughtfulness and Reason improve upon the relationship between the child and the parents, and extend their interest in one another. With choice we fix, and we burn with sympathy. Each virtue takes its turn in each passion. Still new needs, fresher habits and newer kinds of help arise in life, so that a charitable disposition becomes large-hearted and benevolent. Still as one goes on brooding, as one rises, natural love grafted in them becomes a habit ingrained.

The last man hardly attained perfection; he saw him helpless with whom life actually began in the world. Memory of man, and his forecast about future, pointed out the right thing about man's nature. It reminded him of what his youth was, and told him what his after-years were going to be. Thus pleasure, gratitude and hope for future combined together, spread the interest in man. Thus the race of man-kind continued.

147-168. Do not be under the wrong impression that man walked blindly in the state of nature. The state of nature was just the same as the kingdom of God. As creation came into existence, self-love and love of society grew in men. They unified all men and things into a solid union. There was no pride then; nor was there any development of arts of which man could really be proud. Man at that time was not civilised in the modern sense. He lived and walked with beasts, and shared the forest dwellings with them. He enjoyed food with the animals and slept with the animals on the same wooded bed. His hands were not stained with the blood of his kind, nor did he try to murder his brother (as now in a civilised state of society) to advance his own selfish cause. They were all worshippers in the same forest temple, and the woods resounded with the joint prayers of men and animals. All those who had the gift of speech prayed to the same God. The priest of that

forest-temple was pure-hearted, (and not corrupt and selfish as modern priests), and the temple was not stained (as now) with the blood of rival worshippers quarrelling over differences in religious principles. Nor was the forest temple decorated as now with gold (material wealth). The main quality of God then was to take equal care of evrey one, and man's duty was to rule over weaker creatures with a kind and forgiving heart. How different they were from men who were to come later. Half of them play the part of butchers—and the other half are kind and find their places in the grave. In other words, they fight amongst themselves, and are killed in that meaningless struggle over smaller interests. Such men are enemies to nature (because nature never wants men to kill one another over meaningless trifles, particularly when she has provided men with every necessity) ; they live amidst the general cry of pain that arises from their kind. They brazen-facedly kill their own kind driven by self-interest, and are always prepared to betray them in their own interest. Leading a luxurious and slothful life, they easily fall prey to diseases. And out of every death that takes place, there is born another being eager to take revenge on this death. This violent passion, this intoxication of blood, made man's nature fiercer and more savage.

169-186. But observe man ! how he gradually and slowly develops from natural life into artificial life. Reason told them to follow instincts in life. The voice of nature spoke to man in this way : "Go, get your instructions from other creatures ; Learn from the birds what kind of food may be had from the bushes ; Learn from the animals the medicines that are there in the forests to cure ailments ; Learn the art of building construction from the bee that builds the hive beautifully. The mole will teach you how to plough, and the worm—how to weave cloth for yourselves. Little nautilus (perhaps refers to jelly fish that can sail comfortably with its horns) will teach him the art of sailing on the sea—how to spread the thin oar and face the hard wind or the storm. Herein also may be found all forms of social union, and hence let man resort to Reason for finding out his duty. Let man observe and study the world underneath the earth : let him see the towns built in the air on waving trees (by smaller animals or insects). Let him study the works and achievements of smaller geniuses, —the republic of the ants, the kingdom of the bees—how they bestow all their wealth in common, and lead a life without any

dislocation or disturbance even though there is anarchy, that is, no governmental control.

187-198. Though there is a monarch reigning over them, each ant maintains a cell independently for itself. Try to observe what preserve these states of ants and bees—what laws they have made out of the wisdom of nature—and inexorable like those of Fate. In vain does man try with the help of reason to formulate finer laws. He will simply pollute justice thereby. For right things, if they are too rigid and utterly inflexible, gradually become corrupt, and prove wrong at one time or another. Man, of course, is too weak for the strong creatures, and too strong for the weak creatures. Yet he is surely wiser than animals, and therefore should hold his sway over them. The less wise creatures should obey him of necessity. Let him develop those arts which his instincts easily give him, and he will be accepted by lower animals as the king or be worshipped as a god.

199-214. Creation developed in this fashion : Nature spoke out the truth. Man observed nature and obeyed its commands. As a result, cities were built, societies formed, and a state was brought into being. Another state grew nearby the first, and was joined together with the first either out of love or under threat. Did the trees bear better and sweeter fruits in our world than in the world of the animals ? Did the streams flow with purer water in the animal world ? No, there are the same trees and the same streams in the worlds of men and animals.

War could never destroy man-kind ; commerce and trade could never inprove upon the condition of a country, if men, born as friends, turn enemies of one another. Unity and prosperity in the real sense is possible only when there is a free flow of ideas, loving contact among men—when people are free to love one another without any artificial reservation or restriction—when laws of the State are all derived from nature, and not made arbitrarily according to the whims or interests of a few.

It is in this way that states came into existence. The name of the king was unknown for a long time for no need was felt for the post of a king. Till at last common interest placed the reign of government in the hands of a single man. The main qualification of the king was virtue—that is, the power of spreading, blessings to all and protecting all people

from all harms. Just as the sons obey the father in common interest, in the same way, the prince was made the father of the people, and his subjects began to obey his commands in mutual interest, as sons obey their father for their own good.

215-240. Till that time, crowned by nature, each head of a state, whether king, priest or parent, will rule his state. For his people, he will be the representative of God ; his eye will be the law of God, and his tongue will speak the divine voice like the voice of God. He will gather crops (food) from the furrows of the ploughed fields, he will command the fire and control the flood. It is he who will bring to the surface the animals living underneath the ground, and bring down the eagle that is in the habit of soaring high in the air. But a time will come when man will become old and lose all his powers ; he will bend down under the weight of years, fall sick and then die. That is how man, whom lower creatures looked upon as a God, will meet his end. Then they will survey them all from father to father, and try to find out that Great Father whom they worshipped in the beginning through plain tradition which is handed down by one generation to another. The worker was known from the work distinctly, and the simple reason was one and only one.

Before complicated wit was brought into use, and steadiness of light disappeared, man also felt like his master, God, that everything was all right. People walked pleasantly on the road to virtue, and always remembered that they had their father (God) in Heaven. They had faith and allegiance in all the religions of the world, and they had no quarrel over religious principles. For nature knew no right divine in men, and therefore man could fear no ill in God. They trusted that God was benevolent, and was eager to do good to all alike. A sovereign being meant an all-pervading good to the universe. True faith and true policy ran united. Faith was prompted by love of God, and policy enunciated by man.

241-268. Who first thought of making slaves of human souls or undoing and destroying kingdoms ? Who first thought of unifying the different great faiths of the world into one ?— that proud exception to all natural laws to invert the world and counteract its main objective.

First of all, Force made its conquest, and law was based on force. Blind faith then came into being, and introduced a kind

of oppressive and unreasonable fear. Thus this oppressive hand was shared by others. The conquerors were helped by their Gods to be cruel to the vanquished and make them helpless slaves. It was Force, thus, that compelled the weak and the suffering to bend their heads in prayer to the Almighty. When the fiercer aspect of nature came to the forefront—when lightning blazed and thunder roared, when the mountain rocked and the earth cried out of pain, man was forced to pray to God for his safety—to bend his head to the unseen Power which was mightier than man's own.

The earth tore into pieces, the sky burst, and out of them hellish creatures came side by side with Gods. It had a dreadful aspect on one hand, and on the other, it was really blissful, because God revealed Himself through these calamities of nature. On one hand, man became devilish on account of extreme fear ; on the other hand, he learnt to hope for better things to come on earth, in the wake of those calamities.

Cowards naturally thought that gods were partial towards some ; they were whimsical, passionate, unjust. Their main qualities were revenge, anger or passion. And cruel oppressors also will think along the same line. They will naturally conclude that gods are on their side. Not benevolence, but enthusiasm became the guide of man in life. And Hell was built on the hatred of man, and Heaven was built on pride. The Heavenly sky did not appear to be sacred to man because it caused wide-spread destruction. Altars in the temples lost their religious significance ; they simply grew stony and covered with human blood. The light burning on the church-altar saw human blood for the first time ; the image of God also was smeared with blood. Now it is that real thunder came down from Heaven, and gods became active in taking revenge on those thus damaged their creation.

269—282. That is how self-love or egoism works through the just and the unjust ; it adds to the power, ambition, wealth and passion of some men. The same self-love then becomes instrumental in checking man from doing whatever he likes, from government and laws becoming arbitrary. For the liking of one man is good, when others also like the same thing. The desire of one particular person is meaningless, if a large number of persons is opposed to that desire. For how is it possible for

away anytime by surprise. If he wants to be safe, he must not make full use of his liberty. That thing which each is desirous of gaining, *e. g.*, safety, all will join hands to protect it from destruction. Thus, compelled to be virtuous through self-defence, even kings learned how to do justice to others, and how to be large-hearted in their generosity.

283-302. It was under these circumstances that renowned scholars and generous-hearted people, religious and social leaders, poets and patriots arose to bring back that faith and moral nature which God had given the world before, but which had been lost for a while because man had gone astray. The old flame was simply made brighter, no fresh light was brought in. As a result of this new awakening, God's shadow atleast—and not His image, came down on earth. Men and kings learnt now the correct use of powers. They were taught how to maintain the necessary tension of life, neither to make the strings of life tender nor unduly harsh, but justly true. So that other supplementary chords of life also may sound harmoniously by the touch of the true one. Thus the jarring music of the world—the confusion and disturbance of the world—may be overshadowed or drowned by the sweet and harmonious music of the true string of life. Harmony and order in the world are produced out of perfect agreement among all the chords of life. If such an harmony prevails, the strong and the weak, the great and the small will work shoulder to shoulder in perfect agreement for the common cause, and there will be no disruption or disagreement among them in any field of life. They will not encroach upon each other's field, but work for the welfare of the world separately, yet comprehensively, for the common goal. Each will be strong and powerful in its own way, and each will supply the need of the other, and in this respect be complementary to one another. By their harmonious effort, they will bring to one centre and draw to one single point of unity all created beings such as—beast, man, angel, servant, lord or king.

303-318. Fools only try to dispute over the forms of government, for no form is really ideal ; each form serves a particular age and a particular set of circumstances. Forms of government actully evolves with the needs of the times. That form alone can be called the best which administers or rules the best—and serves best the needs of the times.

Ugly fanatics only fight for or dispute over the forms of religion. If a man follows the path of truth, if his life is on the right, the form of religion he follows can never be wrong. Mankind in general is concerned with charity or helping the distressed at the time of need. In detailed principles cf religion—for example, about his faith and hope—the world may not agree, but in respect of charity which is the fundament of all true religions, they will all be unanimous in their verdict. All those religions are false which do not follow charity implicitly. They all will be blessed and loved by God who try to help improve mankind or save it from suffering.

Man is like the broad-hearted vine that helps sustain life. He derives his strength and power from the loving help he renders to his fellow men. The earth, for example, moves on its own axis ; but its main business is to revolve round the Sun. So there are two consistant movements to be found about human soul—one is directed towards its own uplift—but the other aims at improving and comforting the lives of his fellow men.

Thus it is that God-in-Heaven and human society are joined together into one general frame, so that love of one's own self and love of humanity are, in fact, synonymous.

EPISTLE IV

ARGUMENT

Of the nature and state of man with respect to happiness.

Man generally suffers from a false idea of happiness in life. Happiness, of course, is the highest bliss which is the goal of every man in life, and every man can attain happiness in his own way. God is the king of the universe. He looks upon entire humanity with one eye. He is, therefore, equally concerned about the happiness of every one of us. He wants this happiness to be equal. And to be equal, it must be general and not individual, because God rules this universe by general and *not* by particular laws.

It is, of course, necessary for the order and progress and general welfare of human society that material possessions should differ from man to man, real happiness is not made to consist in the achievement of these.

But in spite of that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by Providence by the two passions of Hope and Fear.

What, after all, is the meaning of individual happiness, consistent with the circumstances that the world provides? Of course, the good man has here the advantage, because he gets this happiness more easily than the rest.

Generally, people make the mistake of suggesting that good men are seldom happy in the world because generally they suffer much more than ordinary men. They do not know that these sufferings are not due to their goodness, but are calamities of Nature or Fate.

Some people wrongly suggest that God should be concerned about individual welfare—and not about general welfare. They also say that it is difficult to say who are actually good, because goodness is something relative. But those that are really good must really be happy.

But they forget that happiness is never to be judged by the possession of material or external goods. In fact, they should never be mistaken for rewards of goodness in life. On the other hand, material or external goods often take a man away from virtue and hence from happiness itself. In spite of possessing enormous material wealth, no body can be really happy, if he is not virtuous at heart.

A man may possess honours, nobility, greatness, fame, talents and enormous material wealth—but in spite of them he may not be happy, if he is completely devoid of virtue.

But not all kinds of virtue will lead to happiness. That virtue whose object is universal, and whose prospect is eternal, can lead man to real happiness.

Perfect happiness will go hand-in-hand. They must conform to the order of Providence. Truly virtuous men must submit unreservedly to virtue—and resign to it completely not only in this world but also in the lives to come, before he can enjoy unalloyed and unbroken happiness in life.

EPISTLE IV

PARAPHRASE

Lines 1-18. O, Happiness ! many a name has been given to you—Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content and so on. But you are the sole aim of our lives. It is for your sake that people sigh all over the world. It is for you that we, men, live on earth, and bear to die. You are so near us, yet you are so distant from us, because it is not so easy to attain you in life. You are overlooked by the fool, and seen double by the wise. You are a heavenly plant or seed which has been dropped on earth for man, but it is difficult to know on which soil you grow best and bear fruits for on no mortal soil you appear to prosper long and well. Do you prosper in the brilliance of court-life or in the depth of a diamond mine where darkness is dispelled by the brilliance of rich diamonds—that is, whether happiness is to be had in the glamourous beauty of the court or in the riches of the world. Whether you are to be had in the laurels of Parnassus mountain or in name acquired by iron-clad warriors. That is to say, whether Happiness is to be had in the literary glory or in military achievements.

We do not know where it grows—and where it does not grow. All our efforts to seek it is in vain. For, if we are to blame anything, it is the culture or environment which fails to secure happiness for us and not the soil, for the plant of happiness grows everywhere—and no where ; it all depends on the circumstances or environments for its growth. Happiness is not a thing which can be bought for worldly wealth, for it may run away from a wealthy king and come to you, a poor man. It comes to you free of cost.

19-28. Enquire of the learned people where happiness is to be had. The learned people are blind ; they are not able to see reality for themselves, some of them say that man's duty is to serve mankind as much as possible ; others again say that the best course of life is to live away from mankind. Some of the learned men say, real joy lies in action, others say, the

best course is to live in ease which is another name, according to them, for pleasure and contentment. Some of them go down to the category of beasts, and so their pleasure always ends in pain and suffering. Some rise so high that they consider even virtue as a useless thing in life. There are some people, again, who are so lazy by habits that they have no energy to find out truth for themselves. Either they trust everybody and every thing that comes in their way or they doubt all men and things of the world.

Those that try to define happiness fail miserably, and end by saying that happiness is nothing but happiness itself.

29-34. Therefore, the best course in life is to follow nature's path sincerely, and ignore all the diverse opinions regarding happiness in life. It is possible for every mind to conceive happiness, and for every set of circumstances to achieve it in life. But it should be remembered that prerequisites of happiness are simple and clear ; they all avoid extremes of everything. Happiness generally is to be had in the mean. It only requires right thinking on the part of man, and right aim of the utilisation of means. We may mourn over other things of life as we please according to common convenience.

35-48. We should remember then, man, that is universal, does not act in life by partial laws ; he acts according to general laws in life. He should, therefore, try to achieve that happiness in life which does not concern a single man, but concerns common humanity. Hardly is there any blessing of God on man which is meant for an individual and not for the common run of mankind. Nobody in life rests fully satisfied with the conditions under which he has been living—whether he is a fierce bandit, a proud and mad tryrant or a sadhu living in a cave for spiritual salvation. Everybody must hate some and love others ; everybody must try to find out a friend or an admirer. All pleasures become rotten, and glories prove meaningless, if there be none beside man to share them. With each, pleasure will be nothing short of half the pain, if there be none to share it with him.

49-66. The first law of Heaven is *order*. If that be admitted, some men are surely greater than the rest of them,—definitely richer and wiser in the worldly sense. But how can we conclude that they are happier than others because of their wealth and wisdom ? Why ? that is a question which common sense fails to

answer. Of course, we shall admit that Heaven is absolutely impartial to mankind, only when we find that all men are equally happy. But mutual wants increase this happiness. The differences created by nature are, after all, responsible for maintaining peace. Condition or circumstance is not the main cause of happiness or unhappiness. The bliss of happiness may come to everybody alike—whether he is a subject or a king, whether he is a man seeking defence or is a defender himself—whether he himself is a friend, or is seeking a friend for himself. God breathes the same divine and animating breath through every member of the community of man, just as He has given the same soul to everybody. But all would not have been equally contented, if all of the community of mankind had the same material possessions. If God had meant happiness for all alike, God would have placed contentment in external possessions of life.

67-76. The Goddess of Fortune is rather whimsical. She disposes of her wealth in various ways. And just in accordance with—or in proportion to—this whimsical distribution of her wealth, some are happy and others unhappy. But Heaven's balance will appear altogether just, when we see that some men of the world are found trembling with fear, and some others flushing with the expectation of something nice to take place in life. People are happy generally—not over the present State of things, but over the kind of things they may expect in future. They will be happy, if the hopes for future are bright, and they will be sad, if they are otherwise.

O, you mortal man ! inspite of this disparity on all sides, man vainly tries to rise high by piling mountain on mountain till he touches the sky. He does not know that it is beyond all his powers. It is in God's hand whether he rises or not. So, as man tries all the methods and resources at his command to rise high in life and reach Heaven, Gods in Heaven laugh at his vain efforts. When he rises much too high for himself, his structure tumbles down, and the vain and aspiring man is buried in the ashes of his over-ambitious scheme.

77-96. Man should realise that all the good that man finds on earth, all the good that God and Nature combined give to man in general, all the pleasures secured by reason or understanding, all the joys that senses have—can be summed up in three words—*Health, Peace* and *Competence.* , But we should

not forget that health is the gift of temperance, that is, in freedom from all extremes in habits and conduct of life. And Peace—which is a great virtue—is all man's own creation. The good or bad is gained by the gifts of fortune. But generally man finds the evil more tasteful than the good. In pursuit of worldly profit or joy, who takes the greatest risk ?—those who follow the wrong path—or those who follow the right one ? Those who adopt the virtuous path or those who follow the vicious course ? Those who are blessed through virtue or those who are cursed through vice ? Take into account all those things that are gained in the world by following a vicious career. They are those from which the virtuous people will fly disdainfully away. The bad way or evil path grants a kind of joy which is not real joy—it is only a make-believe joy or imaginary kind of pleasure.

There are some who are blind to truth and have no knowledge of God's wonderful creation. They try to find joy or bliss in a vicious course of life, and a virtuous life hard and troublesome. But those who implicitly follow the order of God in the best possible manner, know what God's blessings mean, and are therefore blest with real happiness in life.

97-110. But the fools alone call the good people unhappy because evil sometimes overtakes them and accidents happen to them. Lord Falkland, one of the finest spirits of the long Parliament and a true patriot dies lamenting over the outbreak of the civil war. His virtuous soul could never tolerate the idea of shedding blood among brethren. Turenne, the great French general, also died inspite of his military achievements and philosophic calmness of mind. Sir Philip Sidney, the jewel of Elizabethan age, was killed in a battle inspite of his nicest literary achievements. They were all accidents in life according to which some of the nicest people died painful deaths. But did they die because they were so virtuous ? Or did they die because they never wanted to live in this world full of evil. Did not they die out of a contempt for the life around ? Say, was it virtue because of which Digby, the son of Lord Digby, died. Say, if virtue is responsible for the death of the son. Why did the father live up to such a long age ? For Rt. Hon. Digby died at the age of 40, whereas his father Lord Digby lived up to 74 and even more. When Plague raged furiously in France, why did the good Bishop M. De Belsunce come forward so fearlessly to the service of the infected people

and die in the end of the same infection ? Such deaths, the poet says, should not be called the ends or rewards of virtue. They are mere accidents. Or why did my poor mother live upto such a long age in spite of her physical infirmities. She died at the age of ninety one.

111-122. What is, after all, responsible for all these physical evils and moral evils on earth ? They are partly due to our going away from nature, and partly to the want of determination or fixed will on our part. If we understand the order of the universe, we shall know that God does not send us evil. That which is partly evil, is after all, good for all, as it is modified by man's wisdom, and improved for man's use. Without this scope for improvement, everything in nature will fall and disappear in course of time.

We might in the same way complain against God. Of the two sons of Adam, Abel, who was on the side of Justice and Truth, was killed by Cain who was distinctly wicked. In the world, so many times it so happens that a virtuous son inherits a very bad disease from his vicious father for no fault of his own. There are some foolish and weak people who think that the everlasting laws of God will be changed to suit the convenience of their favourites.

123-148. Nature follows its own course unaltered by the wishes or command of anybody howsoever powerful or influential. Mount Aetna is a volcano—and its duty is to emit fire and lava at intervals. Will it stop or give up throwing out lava or fire just because a wise man or a saint desires it not to do so ? Oh pure-hearted friend, Hugh Bethel of Yorkshire, let air and sea have new motions to relieve you of your asthmatic fits, I pray. But I know, it is never possible, because the law of nature cannot change for the convenience of a single individual. So my prayer for my dear friend's relief will not be of any avail. When a calamity is to fall on a person or on nature, it cannot be stopped by any means. Gravitation of the earth will never stop acting on earth, if there be a loose top of a mountain, trembles on high and is about to roll down on the passers-by. Nature is not at all anxious about the safety of the passers-by. Nor do the hanging walls or tottering buildings of temples desist from falling down—and wait for such a notoriously vicious man as Francis Chartres to pass under them.

They will fall when they will, whether a good man passes under them or a bad one.

We all want this earth to be a kingdom of the just. But we must first of all consider how the idea of justice agrees. God is specially careful about his treatment towards the good. But none except God Himself knows who are really good. Somebody thinks Calvin, the famous reformer of the 17th Century as a really good man, and he was a representative of God Himself. Another looks down upon him as an agent of Devil himself—an instrument of Hell. If Calvin gets God's blessings or God's punishment, one section or the other of population will lose its faith in God's jüstice—or will doubt the existence of God Himself. That which brings shocks to one group, gives knowledge and information to the other group. All cannot be judged nor blessed by a single standard of goodness or justice, because the very best even may be of various kinds. That quality or virtue which secures a reward in you, may get a punishment in me. But the way the world moves on—the standard of justice it moves on—is just. There is nothing to call in question the rightness of its order. The world is not made for one kind of person ; it is made for good and bad alike—for Caesar as well as for Titus. It is difficult to say which of the two—Caesar or Titus—was more blessed by God,—he who sold the liberty of his country or he who gave up his life for the sake of preserving his country's liberty.

149-166. But sometimes virtue goes unrewarded, and it is the vicious who win and are appreciated. Some may think, what is the use of being virtuous then. Vice gets the reward—as the price of hard work. A wicked man gets a reward because he has worked very hard to deserve it. The wicked man deserves it, when he tempts the main, where folly fights for kings or struggles for selfish ends. If a virtuous man is lazy, and is unable to work as hard as the wicked man, he can never be prosperous, and he has got to be contented with what he has. But supposing if you grant the good man riches, do you think, he will be completely satisfied, and will not ask for anything else ? No, he will not be satisfied with riches alone ; he will demand health, he will demand power. He will ask for control over all earthly things. He will not be satisfied with limited power ; he will strive to be the king with unlimited power and control, Not only that, he will like to know

why outward power was given—and not internal one—why man was not turned a god, and why the earth was not turned into Heaven. Those who argue along these lines will hardly be able to realise that God gives sufficient to man, even though He can give even more. Man's demand is unlimited ; there is no end to his desires.' God's power, too, is unlimited. Can there be any compromise between God's boťndless powers and the inordinate ambition of man ?

167-184. That which nothing of this earth—nothing material—can give or destroy are the equanimity of the soul and the joy that comes out of the depth of the heart.—They are the true rewards of virtue. Does man want a better reward for virtue than these ? Then let lowly and humble people move about in a carriage drawn by six horses, let justice be at the mercy of the conqueror's sword, let truth put on a churchman's or a lawyer's gown. Man is extremely weak and foolish. He does not know Heaven or God does not reward virtuous men with those insignificant and valueless things in Heaven, which men's foolishly crave for hire on earth. Heaven's rewards are different from earthly rewards. The boy or a grown up adult is an individual. Yet one cries for an apple—another for a cake. Likings and demands are different. To Indians—not the worldly life—but the spiritual or the Heavenly life is the real life. An Indían, therefore, looks upon a dog, a bottle or a wife as an insignificant nonentity or mere play-things in life, because his eyes are fixed on another life—the life to come after this. The joy that comes as reward to the virtue is not at all destructive ; it is eternal. How often are undone at sixty the virtues of a saint at twenty one.

185-192. Worldly riches can give reputation, trust, contentment and pleasure to the good and just people only. Judges can be bought with money ; so can the commitee be. They can become biassed in their own interests. But love and respect cannot be bought for money. It is sheer foolishness on the part of man to think that God hates a really worthy man, a lover of mankind who leads a healthy life and whose conscience is clear, only because he is not rich—his income is not a thousand pounds a year—with God there is no rich and poor.

193-216. Men generally make a very big mistake ; they wrongly think that Honour and Shame, Praise and Blame,

depend upon outward conditions of life. It is never so. Honour actually lies in doing one's duty sincerely—playing one's part in life to the best of one's ability. He is honourable who performs his duties sincerely even when placed under extremely adverse circumstances. Fortune in men has made very small difference : one goes about unconcerned in torn clothes ; another proudly moves in gold-laced ornamental clothes. Man of each profession has his respective clothes. The shoe-maker puts on an apron for convenience, the churchman has a gown ; the friar puts on a hood ; the king has a crown on his head. They are simply emblems of the professions to which they belong—and do not necessarily represent any greatness or smallness in society. In what way is a crown superior to or different from the sleeveless head-dress of a churchman ? If a king can act as a monk (as in the case of Pillip V of Spain), the churchman also can act like a shoemaker and be drunk. In fact, it is the inner worth that makes a man ; without this inner worth, no body is fit to be called a man ; men of no real worth are in reality as worthless as leather or prunella, the stuff out of which churchman's clothes are made.

A man may become proud of the titles or worldly honours bestowed on him by kings or other low class dependants of kings, and may start thinking that he is great because he descends from a high family. But if you judge yourself by what your father had been in reality, the number of great men will become so small that it can be counted on finger's end. If your ancient family has produced only scoundrels ever since it saw the light of day, you can never boast of the greatness of your family. If a family has produced drunkards, slaves and cowards only ; it can never be called great even when the blood of the Norfolk family flows through its veins.

217-236. Look at greatness then. Say, where exactly greatness lies. It lies only among the heroes and the wise people. Heroes are all of the same kind—from Alexander the Great of Macedonia to Charles XII. This is agreed to by all. The only strange purpose in the lives of these heroes is to make enemies of mankind. None of them cares to look backward, when he decides on going forward. And while looking forward, they can never see anything beyond their nose, *i. e.*, immediate present. Even diplomats and wise men are also of the same nature. They are all cunning fellows who look round

themselves cautiously for their own gain. They capture other men during their loose and unguarded moments. They succeed not because they are wise themselves, but because others whom they capture are weak. Even if we take for granted that they can conquer, it is doubtless that they are cheats. It is absurd to call a wicked man great because he is shrewd and cunning about cheating others or he is rashly and indiscriminately brave in his deeds; he is a greater fool and a greater knave. Those who try to get noble objects in life by noble means, and when they fail in getting their objects, smile even when in chains, he is really as great as Emperor Aurelius of Rome or like Socrates of Athens who had to die for his wisdom.

237-258. What is fame? It is only an imaginary life depending on the breath or expression of others. It is beyond us even before our death. You have just what you hear and what is unknown—whether it is Tullius cicero's or your own. All that we feel about fame begins and ends in the small circle of our enemies or friends. To all else, it is merely an insubstantial shadow, as meaningless as living Prince Eugene who was a nonentity or the death of Caesar which did not have any repercussion beyond Rome. It is just the same how, when and where they made a name and earned fame—whether it was on the Rubicon or on the Rhine. A wit is a feather, and a chief a rod, and an honest man is the noblest work of God. Fame can save a wicked man from death, exactly as justice is able to tear his body from the grave. Fame is resigned to Forgetfulness and half the race of man is actually ensgulfed in forgetfulness. All fame is external or foreign; it touches or pleases the head no doubt, but it never pleases the heart. One single hodr of life—a solitary action undertaken—if approved of and praised by the doer's own heart, is of much higher value than the loud praises and noisy acclamations of a thousand fools. Marcellus who was opposed to Caesar and who retired to a kind of honourable exile in Mytilene for studying philosophy derived a greater joy at heart, and hence greater fame, than Julius Ceasar who had all his councillors obeying him.

259-268. What is the advantage of being superior in parts. Tell me what is it to be wise. Wisdom means knowing how little can be known, and seeing all others' faults but feeling only his own. A man is condemned to business or to drudge

in arts without a second or without a judge. You would teach truths, or even save a land from ruin. All will fear you—none will come to your help—and none will ever try to understand you. You become prominent. But this prominence is extremely painful, for you see yourself above life's weakness and its comforts.

269-308. These blessings should, therefore, be brought to a strict account. Conclusions drawn from them should be fair and just enough. Try to find out what exactly they amount to—how much each is sure to cost to the other ; how much each will have to lose for the other. Greater good is sometimes very inconsistent with these, for very often life itself is put to danger for the sake of getting comfort and ease. Think deeply over these points, and if you become envious even then, decide whether you would like to be the man to whom they fall. If you are so foolish as to cry for worldly honours or titles, try to find out whether they add any grace or special beauty to Mr. Shadow or Sir Billy (William Yonge whom Pope disliked and who, therefore, lived in disgrace in spite of his qualifications). Is accumulation of yellow dust (gold) the main desire of your life ? Then take the case of the Duke of Marlborough and his wife (Gripus). If you are enamoured of parts in other, take the case of Francis Bacon the Essayist, who was ripe in wisdom, very sound in intellect, yet was very mean because he was greedy of money and was so many times found accepting bribes. Or take another big name which generally overwhelms common minds—that is of Cromwell who was hypocritical and base in mind in spite of his other virtues of the laudable kind. He achieved fame of a lasting kind, but none could forget his vices.

If you bring to mind great names from history—great for their ambitions in life, you are sure to find something or the other conptembtile in each character. Among the rich people there are so many great, honourable and famous people, but they all cling to a kind of happiness which cannot be called real. Those who are favourites of kings or are loved by queens, are betrayed in the long run and are ruined. Note how their prosperity in life grows through miserable and vicious way, just as the magnificent city of Venice rose out of dirt and filth of all kinds. In each of these so-called great men virtue and vice ran side by side, and that thing which raised him in the

eyes of the world as a hero, lowered him as a man. These man have won laurels in various fields in Europe, but these victories are all blood-stained, and are achieved at great moral sacrifice, or bought with gold. You will find these totally unfit for life ; they are either totally exhausted on account of excessive labour or rusted through vice, ease and laziness. In either case, they are notorious for having plundered provinces.

Worldly wealth is sure to bring misfortune in the long run. It can never make a man really famous, nor can it save a man from shame. And what do such people gain at the end of their lives ? Either some self-seeking and greedy fellow starts flattering him for selfish ends, or he is dominated by a haughty wife. Whenever they happen to lie in dignified and careful shades, dreams of magnificent arches and beautifully carved halls disturb their sleep. Unfortunately, the pomp and show that they possess can never alter the physical conditions of life nor the natural phenomena. At the back of all the fame they achieved, there hides a story of shame.

309-326. Realise this truthfully well that virtue alone can give real happiness to man on earth. This is the only point where human bliss stands still, and man tastes good without any mixture of evil. It is along the virtuous path alone that merit gets its due reward, and is blest in what it takes from others. The virtuous man gets unbounded joy, if he achieves his own object in life, but he does not feel any pain whatsoever, if he fails to get his object in life. Its bliss knows no satiety, and so is ever keen and fresh, and the virtuous man relishes life more as he gets more distress out of it.

Crude joy that man generally runs after in life is followed by foolishness and stupidity, and is not at all pleasing. It is far less pleasing than the tears of a virtuous man. God exacts devotion from every man, from every place. He is never tired of putting men to test—action. He does not feel any joy when a man is in distress ; nor is He sorry when another is blessed. He is totally unconcerned about man's happiness or sorrow. And when there is no want, no desire on the part of man, to ask for more virtue will be the correct duty of man.

327-352. Note the bliss that God can bestow on man. This bliss can be tasted by those only who have got the capacity of feeling ; they only know it who have got the power

of thinking. This bliss will be missed by the poor whenever they happen to acquire wealth, or are blinded by dry learning of the books. The bad man will always miss this bliss ; the good will automatically get it even when he is not taught the way of getting it. A man who is free, and is not enslaved to any particular religious idea or communal ideology, and does not adopt any private road to success but looks through nature up to nature's God, is able to follow the order of creation enunciated by God. He is able to join Heaven and Earth, the worldly order with the divine one. He realises that no worldly being can in reality know any bliss, but he only touches some above and some below. Through the union of the rising whole, he realises the last and the final end of human soul. He realises that faith, law, morals all begin and end in love of God and love of man. For such a man only hope travels from one object or goal to another, and his soul realises what the ultimate goal is. Being free and extremely faithful, he is able to pour heavenly joy on entire mankind. He realises why nature gives to man alone hope of known bliss and faith in unknown bliss (after this life of the world). Nature does not give these lessons to man in vain. She gives him this knowledge so that he may find what he tries to get. Nature makes man wise in the present moment ; she connects in this wisdom his greatest virtue with his greatest bliss. Through Nature, man develops a desire for being blest himself, and side by side giving that bliss to others as well.

353-360. Love of one's own self, if sublimated into love of humanity and love of God, secures the blessings of fellow-men. Is this something very little for the heart that is unlimited ? Extend this love of self to others ; let your enemies also share this love of yours. Try to catch hold of the entire world of reason, sense and life into one single system—the system of doing good to your fellow-men. The kinder are you to others the happier are you likely to be. Those who are most charitable or benevolent are likely to be blest the most by God.

[Here Pope is stressing on the necessity of practising the three main principles of Christianity—namely, Faith, Hope and Charity.]

361-372. There is a distinction between the way of God and way of man with regard to love. Human soul rises from

individual to the whole—from the limited to the unlimited; whereas God loves individual through loving the collective whole. Self love helps the virtuous mind to wake up exactly as the peaceful and calm waters of a lake are stirred by a pebble thrown into it. The centre of the lake is moved at the depth; small circles are produced—first one, then another—then still another. In the same way, self love will embrace friend, parent, neighbour and then, gradually, the country also. And then, the next step will be the entire human race. His mind will grow wider and wider, and this love will be showered on every creature of every kind on earth. Till the earth will smile around with immense beauty, and God will see His own inage in the breast of man.

373-398. Come, then, my friend, my genius, the master of the poet, master of the song, come ! while the goddess of poetry rises and falls in accordance with man's low desires or glorious ambitions, teach me how to fall with dignity and rise in temper like you. I would like to learn through communion with you how to change over the temper of poetry from grave to gay and gay to grave, how to be absolutely correct and upright in spirit, how to be smoothly fluent and eloquent, how to be full of reason and yet delightfully pleasant. Along the vast expanse of time, your name, Goddess of Poetry flows uninterruptedly and swiftly. It gathers fame from age to age. Tell me whether my small boat, (this small and insignificant poem) will be able to sail smoothly and face all the storms and tempests on sea, and get over them.

Great statesmen, heroes, even kings have been turned into dust, will this poem succeed in acting as a friend, philosopher and guide to the future generation. It is at your instance, and under your instructions, that I have tried to lay in this poem more emphasis on matter than on style, on reason than on imagination or fancy. Wit holds a false mirror to nature's light ; it shows how a man falls or commits mistakes through vanity : whatever is, is right.

Reason and Passion, though different, have one common aim : love of one's own self—and love of humanity are practically one and the same. It is through virtue alone that a man can be happy in this world. Entire knowlege of mankind is aimed at knowing what we ourselves are—what man himself is.

NOTES

EPISTLE I

Lines 1-16. St. John—The Patron Saint of England who is supposed to look after the welfare of the country as a whole—and also individual men and women in the country. Pope here invokes St. John, the Patron-Saint, in the classical fashion, so that he may be blessed with the power of dealing freely and purely with the subject matter of his poem which is big enough in scheme. **Meaner things**—base, vulgar thoughts. **Low ambition**—to those people who are satisfied with merely rising high in this respect and be satisfied with worldly prosperity (Abstract for Concrete here). **Pride of kings**—vanity that kings suffer from—because they are the temporal heads. They feel they can turn everything on earth to their own advantage. **Since......to die**—Life on earth does not give much scope for gathering wisdom. In course of a life, a man can only observe certain things about him within the short span allotted and then he is called upon to leave this world. **Look about**—observe for experience. **Expatiate**—literally to range over in space, to wander freely—here in the sense of discussing freely and cover a very wide ground. Pope proposes to cover in the poem the problems of good and bad in relation to human life—which is surely a very wide subject. **Scene of man**—the world at large—wherein man is called upon to act. **Mighty maze**—avery big puzzle—with so many intricate turnings on all sides that man is very likely to lose his way. Pope calls man's scene of action (this world) a very intricate and confusing path along which man can easily lose his way. **A wild**—a forest track. **Promiscuous shoot**—come out without any definite law or reason ; on the forest track shrubs and bushes grow wlthout any consideration of order or convenience—without any definite law as such. Life, according to Pope, is a vast tract of forested land of course created according to a plan. But on it bushes and shrubs, fruits and flowers, grow here and there freely according to

their free choice. **Tempting with forbidden fruit**—reference is here to the Bible. God had asked Adam and Eve not to taste the apple which explained the mystery of creation. But they violated God's order under the persuasion of Satan (in the form of a serpent) and in consequence were expelled from Heaven. Pope means, the world is so full of pitfalls. Temptations there are on all sides, and man may easily be ensnared. **Beat**—traverse. **Ample field**—vast tract of land. **Covert**—hidden place. **Explore**—examine thoroughly. **Blindly creep**—walk along the ground without looking about them. **Sightless soar**—go up in the air without the power of observation. That is, those who simply walk about without having the power of proper observation. **Candid**—frank ; open hearted. **Vin dicate**—justify. **Vindicate the ways of God to man**—justify the order of this creation to man, so that man may understand its intricacies. This seems to be the object with which Pope tries to write this long poem.

17-32. Reason—argue. **But from what we know**—except from the little knowledge at our disposal. **Station**—position. **Thro' worlds unnumbered**—the numberless planets, like the earth in the sky ; note here how Pope's knowledge of the astral bodies was up-to-date then.' **Tis ours......own**—it is man's duty to seek God out in his own way. **Vast immensity can pierce**—has the power of looking through the vast expanse of the sky. **Worlds on worlds etc.**—how this universe of ours is composed of many worlds of the type in which we live. **What other planets etc.**—there are other planets like this earth of ours—which move round not this Sun—but other suns placed in different places of the space. This suggests the unimaginable immensity of space. **Varied being peoples every star**—different kinds of people living in different planets in the space. That suggests that the theory of space had been formed as early as Pope's time, and Pope had an up-to-date knowledge of the same.

33-42. Great chain—the binding tie which links together the diverse object of the universe into an harmonious whole. **Presumptuous**—haughty ; thinking too much of himself. **So little**—so insignificant in relation to the vastness of the universe. **Blind**—not able to realise the truth or mystery lying behind the apparent veil covering the universe. **Thou canst**—you can. **Why oaks are made etc.**—why certain trees are made bigger than others—and why is it that they

shelter or protect the smaller plants growing below them. Why this order of nature? **Yonder**—that. **Argent**—bright. **Argent fields**—bright and shining field above—*i. e.*, the sky. **Why Jove's Satellites are less than Jove**—why the stars which shine by the light of the Sun, are smaller in size than the Sun. Pope means that in nature and in the universe, everything is made according to a definete plan. The shape and size of the different objects of nature are significant, because they fulfil certain purpose of nature.

43-50. Coherent—harmoniously connected. **Scale of reasoning life**—amongst rational beings created by God. **Wrangle**—quarrel. **Where all must full etc.**—"where there can be no gap, unless there is a want of cohesion."

51-60. Relative to all—in proportion to—or in relation to the rest of them; when taken collectively. **Scarce one purpose gain**—is hardly able to achieve a single objective. **In God's .....produce**—but one single action on the part (contrary to man's) of God is able to produce a result effective on entire mankind. That is the main difference between God's action and man's action. **Acts second to**—is directly subordinate to; is under the direct control of. **Verges to**—inclines on goal; object. **It is but.........whole**—to human eyes just a small part is visible; therefore man is not able to see how a single action of God is able to produce world-wide—or universe-wide effect.

61-76. Steed—war-horse. **Restrains**—checks by reins. **Fiery course**—violent speed. **Clod**—piece of earth. **Egypt's god**—the bull enjoyed the sacred position of a god in Egypt for a long time. Apis, the bull of Memphis, enjoyed the highest honours of a god among Egyptians. It is quite possible that the bull was regarded as a sacred symbol of a great divinity—

But, no doubt, a particular bull named *Apis* was recognised by an elaborate system of sacred marks. The Bull was treated with strict ceremony, but it was not allowed to live for more than 20 years. Then it was killed and buried secretly in a well. Another bull with the same sacred marks was sought to be installed in the temple. We have reference to Apis, the sacred bull, in Milton's poetry also. **Is now a victim.........god**—the ways of god are inscrutable. Sometimes the dull ox is made to break the clods

of earth, **sometimes he is killed for delight**; at others he is looked upon with a considerable respect as a god—or the symbol of a powerful god. **Comprehend**—understand. **Why doing, suffering etc.**—man is not able to understand why he is made to pass through different phases of life ; sometimes he suffers, sometimes he is prevented from action by circumstances ; sometimes man is a slave ; at others he is worshipped as a god. Who will explain why there are so many changes in a man's life. **His time a moment, and a point his space**—man is not imperfect in his knowledge ; he has gained perfection. Yet he cannot account for these changes in his life—these ups and downs—because in proportion to universal time, his life covers only a single moment ; the place he lives in is nothing more than a spot. So it is his smallness or insignificance that debars him from real knowledge of things.

77-90. Page prescribed, their present state—God hides from his creatures his fate ; he is not allowed to have a single peep into future. He only knows the present moment, nothing more. **Or who could suffer being here below**—if it were possible for man to know whot was going to happen to him in future, he would never have cared to stay on earth. Compare Browning who also expressed the same idea :

> "Ah ! that man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what's Heaven for ?"

Kindly given—it was very kind of God not to have given man the power of fore-seeing future ; otherwise none of the created beings would have completed the circle of life he had been ordained to complete. **Who sees with equal eyes ... a sparrow fall**—Pope here repeats an idea of the Bible in his own words (*cp.* St. Matt. X 29-31). Pope mean's that God is strictly unpartial. He treats the biggest and the minutest objects of His creation with equal concern ; it may be the death of a hero or great man or the fall of a mere sparrow which is so insignificant. God takes equal care for all beings high or low, great. or small. **And now a bubble burst etc.**—God is the complete master of His universe. Nothing happens with out His express desire—whether it is a big thing or a small one, whether it is the bursting of a mere bubble or the crash of a world—everything is preordained by God.

91-112. Hope humbly then—do not allow your ambitions to go beyond limits, lest they should lead to frustration in life. **With trembling pinions soar**—go up slowly and cautiously as birds go up—not in a straight flight, but rather shakily and with cautious upsurges. **Great teacher**—death is agreat teacher because he has many instructions to give to man. **What future bliss etc.**—you are not allowed to know what lies in store for you in future. You resent it, but you do not know that this ignorance is a bliss ; it is to your advantage. **Hope springs eternal.........to be blest**—Pope is of the opinion that hope never ceases to grow in human heart. In fact, Hope is the fundament of human life. It is on hope that man lives. Those who have nothing to hope for in life are as good as dead. At all stages of life, man hopes for the best. He hopes to pull himself out of the worst of situations, and conquer the hardest of difficulties.

"The present was never a happy state to any human being ; but that, as every part of life, of which we are conscious, was at some point of time a period yet to come, in which felicity was expected, there was some happiness produced by hope."
(Johnson)

The soul uneasy etc. —human soul feels extremey uneasy being away from Heaven, its eternal home, and prefers to live in future. Hence future is better fitted to give happiness to man.

Lo—Look at ; observe. **Poor Indian**—perhaps Red Indian savages. **Untutored**—uneducated and hence unsophisticated. **Sees god in clouds**—savages live in the forest, and are, therefore, in the closest touch with nature. They see God reflected in the different natural objects because they have an inner faith in the existence of gods and goddesses. So they easily become Pantheists. **Proud science**—Science, inspite of its boast of having discovered the mysteries of nature, coulds not sophisticate the minds of these simple and faithful savages paying their sincerest regards to the forces of nature. **Far as the solar walk**—along the way the Sun moved. This is an example of poetic license, for the Sun never moves. **Milky way**-a passage created in the sky by thick clusters of stars. **Humbler heaven**—savages have not been able to discover the higher Heaven behind cloud-capped hills ; their Heaven is somewhere about them, closer to the earth, in the bosom of nature.

Watery Waste—some out of the way places on the sea where man seldom goes. **Fiends**—evil spirits. **Christians thirst for gold**—here is a hit on the adventurous and commercial spirit of the people of his times. Adventurous people generally went about in the world in the quest of new lands, so that their wealth may increase. **He asks no angel's wing etc.** —the savage is contented with his own state ; he is never so eager to probe into the mysteries of the universe. He never seeks any supernatural powers like the wings given to some angels by God—nor does he like to have fire which seraphs have been endowed with. It is this contentment with his humble state that makes him happy.

113-130. **Wiser thou**—the savage is wiser than a so called civilised man, because he has been able to keep his ambition within limits. Pope here criticises the so-called civilised men because they criticise God. They feel, God has not been just or one-eyed in his distribution of gifts to man. Some have too much —others have two little. **Be the god of God**—sit in judgment over the supreme God, the creator of everything in the universe. Man commits this error by being puffed with the power of reasoning. He starts feeling himself superior to God himself—and does not know why things have been done in a certain manner; he is not able to justify the ways of God to man. **If angels fell**—angels tried to have wings. Unwinged angels tried to fight with the winged ones. Angels tried to usurp the powers of gods—and they were punished with a fall. **Men rebel**—in thesame way, by trying to find fault with the divine order, man rebels against his justice, his fall, too, is likely.

131—140. **'Tis for mine**—man is so proud and so self-centred that he feels everything in the universe has been created for his use and convenience. No other being is permitted to use it. **Genial**—benevolent. **Suckles each herb**—every plant and tree is helped to grow. **Nectareous**—better known as nectar or ambrosia, the food of the gods which has the power of making one immortal (*Amrit*). **My footstool Earth, my canopy the skies**—out of vanity man thinks that everything created by God on earth is made for man and man alone. The earth is his footstool on which he stands for his pleasure and convenience, and the sky is the covering overhead. He does not admit the right of any other creature to enjoy the amenities provided by nature or God.

But errs not nature.........to the deep.—

141—164. But nature goes on working up to its end without any mistake. From the burning sun in the sky, fire descends on earth, earthquakes take place on earth swallowing mercilessly men and animals and things ; sometimes floods take away the toll of an entire nation or a country. **Partial**—for a group or individual ; but nature's laws are meant for all ; they cause good to some and evil to others. It depends on circumstances under which different people are placed. **Deviates**—goes away from the main aim or object.

Borgia—Caesar Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI. He was born before his father became the Pope. He was very handsome and accomplished, but probably the worst man of the age. His personality was very attractive, and he had a very eloquent and persuasive tongue. He could get anything he liked merely for the asking. But he found an unholy pleasure in torturing people, lying, poisoning and even killing people for his own ends. He poisoned his own brother. The whole of Italy was afraid of his unscrupulous designs. He and his father took a portion of that poison which had been prepared for 12 guest Cardinals. Under the effect, his father, the Pope died—but he survived probably because of his very strong constitution. He became a soldier of fortune later—and was killed in an unimporant battle which won him no name. **Catiline**—Sergius Catiline, a Roman noble who became notorious for his plot to upset the constitution of his country. Catiline was very strong physically—and had no moral scruples. He was reckless and licentious. He became the leader of some young Romans who were to undermine the govt. But Cicero, the consul, discovered the conspiracy at the right moment, and thus the efforts of Catiline and his group foiled totally. **Pours fierce ambition in a Caesasr' mind**—Makes the mind of Caesar unduly or inordinately ambitious. It is difficult to say which Caeser, Pope had in mind. It is applicable to Caeser Borgia son of Pope Alexander VI as also Julius Caesar who ruled Rome in the 1st century, and was murdered for his ambition.

165-172. Were there all haremony, all virtue here-better it would have been, if there were virtues alone in this world—and no evil wind disturbed calm atmosphere or the surface

of the ocean. **Discomposed**—ruffled ; disturbed. **Subsists**—lives. **Elemental strife**—clash of one element of the earth with another. **Clements of life**—ingredients or component parts of life.

173-188. What would this man—what does man want, after all ? **Now upward will he soar................more**—sometimes man would be noble and virtuous, and would be nothing short of an angel in purity and nobility. **Made for his use etc.**—man considers himself the best of all earthly creatures and says that all other creatures have been made to serve him, and to be used by him. But what will be the use of creating other creatures, if man assumes to himself the powers of all the creatures ? **Without profusion**—not in abundance ; within limits. **Compensated**—made up for. **Here**—in the case of man. **There**—in animals. **State**—condition or circumstances of each man or animal. **Abate**—make less ; decrease. **Shall be alone.........blest with all**—is it ever possible for man whom we call a rational animal to be satisfied with anything less than everything in the world ? He can never live by himself without the aid of others.

189-200. Think beyond mankind—think of anything beyond the jurisdiction or the province of man's reasoning powers. **Microscopic eye**—the power of seeing or observing very small or minute objects which cannot be seen except with the help of a microscope. **Finer optics**—keener or stronger eyesight. **Mite**—a very small thing. **Not comprehend the heaven**—not to try to understand the Heaven which is beyond the scope or province of his reason. **Agonize**—suffer pain. **To smart or agonize at every pore**—to feel extreme pain at every pore of the skin. **Effluvia**—something flowing out in a subtle and invisible form—some noxious exhalations of the body. **Darting**—passing quickly. **Die of a rose in aromatic pain**—so delicately built that it dies on account of the strong perfume or aroma of a rose.

201-6. Stunned—overwhelmed ; made unconscious. **Music of the spheres**—music of the earth rotating and revolving—music from an unknown and secret source. **Zephyr**—west wind. **Purling rill**—murmuring river, both sweet sounding. **Alike in what it gives, and what denies**—God is strictly just and impartial. He gives and refuses things with strict impartiality. **If nature thundered etc.**—God is so

NOTES

EPISTLE II

In this Epistle, Pope deals with the nature and state of man in relation to himself, as an individual. God is unknowable. It is no use trying to probe into God's doings. The best course for man is to try to study himself—his nature, his hopes and fears, the strong and weak points in his nature. His capacity is limited. God does not want that man should go beyond certain limits. There are two main principles that guide man in his actions—self-love and Reason. Every man is composed of virtues and vices. But every man is gifted with reason to distinguish between the two.

Line 1. Know then thyself—In Juvenal, we find the same dictum. the author of this oldest philosophic dictum is unknownf It is said, Seven Sages met at Delhi, and as the first fruits o. their wisdom, they wrote on the Temple of Apollo. "Know thyself" ; "Nothing in excess". The implication is quite clear. The first and foremost duty of man is to try to find out who he is, where from he has come, whereto he has to go, what his duties are as long as he stays here. In the *Upanishads*, also, we have the same idea—

Presume not God to scan—It will be presumptuous and haughty on the part of man to try to know God—for God is unknowable. He should be satisfied with knowing himself.

2. The proper study of mankindis man—man cannot be known through any other source. Man can be known only through studying man, individually and collectively in all possible aspects—man in every stage of development—man under all sorts of circumstances, man in weal and woe, man in virtue and vice.

4. **Darkly wise**—knowing certain things very well—at the same time, altogther ignorant about others. **Rudely great** —he has been endowed certain powers by God, but he is much boastful about these powers, and **is**, hence, haughty.

5. **Sceptic**—literally, the word means—"I look round, I consider". Hence sceptic is one who considers and doubts.

But he is not an unbeliever. An unbeliever makes up his mind definitely—but a sceptic is doubtful whether to believe or not. He has sufficient knowledge not to be a sceptic.

6. Stoic—There was a School of ancient philosophers founded by Zeno. The name is derived from the painted porch, the place where the founder taught. They believed that passions were given only to be crushed in life, and this passionless state they called Apathy. It is difficult to say whether stoics intended their Apathy to be so complete as Pope describes it, or meant more than that man should keep himself free from the mastery of passion. The stoics lived very noble lives, by no means deserving the epithet—"lazy". The Epicureans are generally contrasted with the stoics. The Epicurus said : 'Follow nature ; Pleasure is the highest good.' By nature, he meant higher nature of man ; by pleasure he meant the pleasures of intellect and contemplation of diviner things. But the followers of Epicurus corrupted his doctrine by transferring it to lower pleasures. So that their motto became—"Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die".

7-10. He hangs between—man generally wavers between Stoic doubt and Epicurean desire for seeking pleasure. **In doubt to act, or rest** – man does not know whether he should go on acting with doubts clouding his mind about the existence of God—or he should leave these things alone, and devote himself entirely to pleasure-seeking. **God, or beast**—man does not know whether to look upon himself wise as a god or ignorant like an animal. **Reasoning but to err**– man is proud of his reasoning power. He applies it to life, but fails mostly to find correct result.

11-18. Chaos of thought and passion—partly due to his thinking and partly due to the passions that rage in his heart, he is confused in finding the right path in life. **Abused**—deceived (used in obsolete sense). **Disabused**—undeceived. **Great lord etc.**– as highest creation of God, and as a being gifted with reason, man is the master of the creation. Yet, strangely enough, he is so made that he can easily fall a prey to everything, big or small. **Sole judge of truth..... hurled**—being gifted with the power of Reason, man is the only being competent to know Truth. But it is a sad paradox that he is mostly through into mistakes. **The glory, jest, and riddle of the**

world—man is the most glorious part of God's creation; yet he is ridiculed because of his frequent failures and helplessness. Thus he present a problem which is difficult to solve.

20-23. State—control. **Correct old Time**—this is an allusion to the reform of the calendar amongst continental nations, which was not introduced into England till 1752, when 11 days were slipped out in the month of November, greatly to the indignation of the ignorants, whose cry was—"Give us back our eleven days". **Soar with Plato**—rise up to the level of Plato's thoughts by studying that great Greek Philosopher. **Plato**—an eminent Greek Philosopher who was a disciple of Socrates. The teachings of Socrates have been handed down to us through the *Dialogues* of Plato in which Plato makes his master speak to him on different topics. 'Plato' was a nickname given to him on account of his build—broad shoulders and chest. He remained attached with his master for eight years—till his death. He was compelled by persecution to go out of Athens. He returned when he was forty. During this period, he travelled widely through different countries. He died in the middle of the fourth century B.C. Over the porch of his house stood the inscription—"Let no one ignorant of Geometry enter."

The best known of his Dialogues are :

(1) *Republic* : dealing with the investigation of an ideal state, and the question of finding out truth thro' education.

(2) *Apologia Socrates* : written in defence of Socrates, his master.

In Plato, poetry and philosophy are very happily combined.

Empyreal Sphere—fiery sphere—the region of the Sun. There is another interpretation of the phrase. The empyreal sphere was believed to be the outermost of a set of spheres of which the ancients considered the Earth to be the centre. These were seven according to Greek thinkers—and nine according to medieval theologians. This sphere was believed to be inhabited by that supreme God who controlled other spheres.

24-25. First good—perfect archetypes or patterns of which all earthly qualities were imperfect representatives. **His followers**—disciples of Plato, called Neo-Platonists. **Mazy round**—confused way. **Trod**—walked.

27-28. Eastern Priests—some say he means by the phrase the Priests of Baal ; others say Pope referred to the sacred dance of the Mohamedan monks. **Giddy Circles**—confused way they follow.

30. Drop into thyself—after following uselessly for a time all these confused ways of thinking, you will have to relapse into yourself, and be where you were formerly.

34. Newton—Sir Isaac Newton, the most famous Mathematician and Philosopher (born 1642). He made important discoveries about the movement of the planets and comets. He discovered the prismatic colours of light and also the Law of Gravitation. Here, of course, Pope does not mention Newton very respectfully.

39-42—How strange it is that if left without any check, man's superior knowledge rises gradually, and he acquires proficiency in one art after another. But when he comes to his own real work—that is knowing himself through the study of man, Passion destroys that part of the work which is achieved through Reason.

43-49. With modesty—not in a haughty and proud manner. **Equipage of pride**—all those bad qualities that come through pride. **Strip off**—throw away ; cast off. **Vanity or dress etc.**—all that showyness and self-consciousnesst hat come in wake of learning. **Ingenious**—skilful. **Expunge**—cut out delete. **Lop**—cut off. **Excrescent**—protruding or come out of the main body ; superfluous.

54. Self love to urge, and reason, to restrain—love of one's own self goads man to action ; and it is his reasoning power that checks him from going astray or going beyond limits.

55. We cannot say, this is good and that is bad. The image is taken from the works of a watch. Self-love is the main spring, the motive power, which makes the watch go. Reason is the regulator which controls the motion preventing it from going too fast or too slow.

69. Sedate—calm.

72-78. Reason's at distance—reason can control those things that are at a distance in the future. In this respect. reason is weaker than self-love. Reason lies in prospect—that is, in

front. **Thicker**—larger in number. **Throng** — crowd in. **Still**—constantly.

81-88. Subtle—sophisticated. **Schoolmen**—philosophers of the middle ages, who combined ancient philosophy with the doctrines of the Roman church. They applied the doctrines of Aristotle to prove the truths of Christianity. **More Studious etc.**—Philosophers are better filled and more inclined to seek out differences between things, whereas poets seek out similarities between things. So philosophers divide and poets unite. Compare Bacon who advises people to study schoolmen, if they wish to analyse things and find out differences. **Rash dexterity**—indiscreet knowledge which they apply to finding out truth. **Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire**—suffer on account of their dislike, and find joy in wishing for certain things.

90-98. Taste the honey—get full advantage of a thing without allowing the thing to suffer in any way. **List under**—come under ; is included in.

101-110. Stoics—a sect of philosophers—See notes on *Ep. II line 6* . **Diversely**—in different ways. **Reason the card**—Reason is the guide in our very age of life. . **Card**—really means chart for the guidance of the sailors. **Passion is the gale**—passion creates commotion or disturbance in life. It is because of this storm that the boat of life is endangered at times along its voyage through the world. **He mounts the storm etc.**—God alone can control or subdue the storm of passions. God can ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm.

124. When in act they cease, in prospect rise—Man has his eyes always fixed on pleasure. Whenever a man fails to find them actually, he looks forward to them—and dream of them—in future.

132-39. Aaron's serpent—Please refer to *Exodus VII, line 11-12*. **Vital humour**—important mood.

144-150. Peccant—guilty ; sinning. **Gives it edge**—sharpens it. **As heaven's blest beam etc.**—wine which contains little body or which contains little spirit, soon becomes sour on exposure to the air rather than to the sunshine. **Weak queen**—reason.

154. A sharp accuser but a helpless friend—it tries to find fault with us mercilessly, but does not help us to improve.

150. Humours—moisture ; wetness. According to old theories of medicine, man had within him four humours—black bile, yellow bile, blood and phlegm. The mixture of these was called temperament. If the mixture was in good proportions, the man was good tempered. If one or other of these preponderated, man was sad, choleric, violent, hopeful or dull. Here, of course, the word is used in literal sense. Rheumatism or gout was caused by an excess of phlegm in the body. Aggravation of Humours caused diseases.

160. The doctor fancies—the attempt of the doctor always was to drive out of the patient all kinds of ill humour.

161. Nature's road must ever be preferred...guard—the best course is to live as close to nature as possible. Reason here cannot guide us ; it can simply guard against wrong path.

163. Rectify—set right. **Overthrow**—pull down ; defeat.

167. Like varying winds etc.—Men are driven this way and that in life by their changing passions exactly as a boat is driven this way and that in the sea by the winds changing their direction.

175-180. Educing good from ill—deriving some kind of virtue even out of vice. **Mercury**—quicksilver which expands when heated at a uniform rate. The heat of passion thus is marked by the point where mercury is fixed. **And in one interest etc.**—body and mind act harmoniously in co-operation with each other because the interest of both is the same in this case.

181-182. As fruits etc.—sometimes gardeners do not take much care about certain fruits. They grow uncared for on wild and thorny stocks by themselves. In the same way, some virtues come out of evil passions even without being cultivated.

187-189. Fortitude—strength of mind. **Avarice**—greed. **Prudence**—wisdom. **Sloth**—idlenes or dullness. **Philosophy**—love of knowledge ; wisdom. **Strainers**—some device for separating grain from chaff or sediments from pure liquid.

191-197. Ignoble—low ; mean. **Emulation**—jealousy ; rivalry. **Byas**—bias ; weight on one particular side showing inclination or preference.

198. Nero—A notorious name among Roman Emperors. His reign began auspiciously. He had manly beauty, talents,

graces. Early in youth, he came under the influence of Philosopher Seneca. But it was his wicked mother who proved an evil gemus in his life. He was tempted to adopt licentious and vicious ways in life. He used to sing and dance on the stage alongwith professional actors. He set the city of Rome on fire for the sake of personal enjoyment. He persecuted the christians cruelly. Incensed by his persecutions, soldiers rose in revolt. Towards the end of his life, Nero felt deserted and lonely. He committed suicide when he was a little above 30. He was looked down upon as a tyrant. Yet flowers on his urn proved that there were people who pitied him sincerely. **Titus**—was one of the good and noble emperors that sat on the throne of Rome. He took command of the Roman army when his father was engaged in Jewish War. He distinguished himself as a general the seige of Jerusalam in A.D. 70. Titus succeeded his father as emperor. He was a noble and merciful emperor, and never besmeared his hand with the blood of his subjects. On account of his many-sided qualities and virtues, he was called "The Delight of the human race". He thought 'he lost a day', if he had not shown favour to any one any day. **Nero reigns a Titus**—a cruel king reigns like a noble monarch.

199. Fiery soul—passionate and enthusiastic heart. **Abhorred**—hated. **Catiline**—A Roman noble who conspired to overthrow the constitution of his country (Please see Notes *Ep. I, l. 156*)

200. Decius—a plebein counsel who was wholly devoted to his country's good. He showed wonderful courage and sacrifice at the battle of Vesuvius in the great Latin war.

Curtius—was one of the noblest of Romans who sacrificed his life for the good of his country and people. A deep pool or rift had been created by flood in the forum. People thought it was a gulf created by the wrath of the gods, and could not be bridged till a great sacrifice was made. Gold and ornaments were cast into gulf to no effect. Gods required the sacrifice of the best. So Curtius, a noble and brave youth, came on horseback and leapt into the chasm. Gods were pleased with this noble sacrifice, and the chasm was bridged. His sacrifice for his country, therefore, is divine.

202-209. Knave—wicked fellow. **Tho' each by turns etc.**— each encroaches upon the other by turns. **Well-wrought**

—very well executed. **Difference is too nice**—light and shade are so well mixed up that it is difficult to know one from the other.

217. Mien—countenance.

224. Greenland zembla—(**Russian**) two islands in the north of Russia, desolate and hence very thinly populated.

233-241. By fits is fair and wise—rogues and wicked men, too, are fair and wise at times, though by fits and starts, and not consistently. **Several goal**—each individual has many objects in life. **Caprice**—whim. **Frailties**—weaknesses.

254. Endear the tie—make the common bond closer and hence make them love one another.

261-270. Pelf—wealth. **No one will change etc.**—none is prepared to exchange his place or position with another. Each feels happy in his own position. **Sot—a man** stupefied with drinks. **The starving chemist in his golden views supremely blest**—The word "chemist" is here used in the sense of 'alchemist'—or one who can turn iron into gold. In the middle ages there were many who passed their lives in vain search for the knowledge of Alchemy—or Philosopher's stone. Of course, they did not find the philosopher's stone—nor any knowledge of Alchemy. But in course of their search, they came to know many things about chemistry. Most of these men remained poor throughout their lives.

274-280. Nor quits us when we die—hope clings to human breast till the time of death. A man cannot live without hope. **Rattle, straw** — small, insignificant play things. **Scarfs** — Badges of Honour generally given to Doctors of Divinity during Pope's days. **Garters**—the insignia of the famous order of knighthood instituted by the famous order of knighthood. **Beads**—small balls of glass strung on a thread.

281-289. Bauble—hollow and showy things of apparent pleasure. **Gilds**—decorates. **Varying rays**—changing colours. **Want of happiness by hope supply'd**—whenever a man is unhappy, he tries to anticipate happiness in future and thus be pleased for a while. **Vacuity**—void or emptiness. **One prospect lost**—whenever a man loses a particular chance of becoming happy.

291-2. Even mean self-love etc.—even self-love which is a low kind of passion helps a man, through God's grace, to measure others' meanness or hypocrisy.

NOTES

EPISTLE III

This Epistle deals with the nature and state of man with respect to society.

According to Pope, the entire universe is one big system of Society. In this society of the universe, no single man can say : "This is entirely for myself". For nothing is created herein for individual advantage. God has not worked for the good of a single man, he has worked for the collective good of humanity—of the animal world as well. They are all nature's children. Nature divides her care among all of them. The happiness of animals is mutual. Reason and instinct operate alike on society. Art is born when reason allows itself to be instructed by instinct (classical view.)

The origin of society, government and religion may be traced back to love of one for another—concern of one for another. Superstition and oppression, likewise, are based on fear, some real others imaginary. But whatever that may be, self-love always acts on individual, social or public welfare.

No government, in fact, can be called good or bad. That which administers or works best may be called the best. It is judged by its practical utility.

1. Here then we rest—the crux of the whole thing is this.

1-2. The order of the world or the universe is set according to one particular purpose and towards one particular purpose. The destination is one and the same ; but the ways are different.

9. Plastic nature—nature that form and exercises moulding influence.

10. The single atoms each to other tend—Here is a reflection of the doctrines of Democritus and Lucretius. Democritus did not believe that the universe or the world came into existence out of a playful fancy of the Gods. The phenomena of nature follow a particular order. The main principles he lays down in this connection are :

(1) From nothing comes nothing.

(2) Nothing that exists can be destroyed altogether ; they simply change their shapes. All changes are due to combination and separation of molecules.

(3) Nothing actually happens by chance or without cause. Every event has a necessary cause.

(4) Things that really exist are atoms and empty space.

(5) The atoms are unlimited in number, and infinitely various in form. They mate and separate. Hence changes take place. They strike together, and motion is produced in the world.

(6) Human soul is composed of smooth, round atoms like those of fire. They are mobile, and hence they get into the whole body, and in their motion, the phenomenon of life arises.

These atoms, according to Democritus, are individually without sensations. They combine in obedience to mechanical laws, and even sense and thought are the results of their combination.

Democritus, however, does not say anything about the adaptation of one part of an organism to another part, and to the conditions of life, more specially the construction of the human body.

Empedocles introduced the idea of love and hate among the atoms to account for their combination and separation. Atoms in harmony with their environments—of similar nature—combined together just to maintain themselves, while unfit combinations disappeared.

Thus, the theory of the "Survival of the Fittest" was present in the world, in some form or the other, about 2000 years ago.

15-16. Dying vegetables.........again—vegetables dry up through weather in course of time, but they do not become altogether extinct. After their death, they supply seeds for the fresh growth of vegetables. Thus nothing practically dies for ever.

21. Parts relate to whole—small atoms make up the whole of a thing. So nothing is dropped into the world fully made.

27-30. It is wrong to think that things of comforts and necessaries—things that bring joy to mankind—were created for man's comforts and joys alone. Man thinks so only out of vanity.

33-38. His throat—the female linnet does not sing. **The bounding steed you pompously bestride**—the prancing horse on which you enjoy a ride. **Vindicate**—justify.

44. The fur that warms etc.—the fur that has been made into a coat to warm a king had at one time been the wool over the body of a bear. So that nothing in the world is made for one ; it is for all.

50. Tyrant of the whole – if man tries to be the overbearing Lord of all, and becomes a tyrant to other creatures, Nature would not put up with it. Nature will atonce check it.

56. Philomela—original name of Nightingale. Refer to the story of the classical mythology how Philomela, one of the two daughters of Pandion, the King of Attica, was turned into a nightingale.

68. Than favoured man by touch ethereal slain—particular favourites of God killed by lightning sent down from Heaven. Pope does not seem to be correct in this view, Greeks considered lightning as the expression of the wrath of God. It did not come down on the favourites, but on the sinners.

74-76. Heaven has deliberately kept man in awe of death, so that he may be kept in check. He does not know wherefrom Death comes to him, how and when ! – Death, the mysterious, has always produced fear in man's heart.

84. What Pope or Council—Pope here is very frank in his remark. It is rather unusual for a staunch Catholic like him to say so.

97. Raise over—praise ; count superior to.

101-110. Prescient—knowing or scenting the event before it actually came about. **Withstand**—face ; oppose ; fight against. **De Moivre**—was a famous French Mathematician born in 1667. He was a French Protestant, and after the Revolution of the Edict of Nantes, De Moivre took shelter in London for personal safety. England conferred great honour on him for the 'Doctrine of Chances he enunciated. Newton

himself had a great respect for him. He made a name for himself by answering questions on chances and annunities. **Without rule or line**—without any written on regular calculation. **Stork**—The stork performs periodically very extensive journeys. Throughout the east and in several parts of Europe, the stork is protected by law, because it acts as the scavenger, and also because the stork, because of its exploring habits, can easily catch the imagination of children all over the world. It loves exploration like Columbus. **Phalanx**—a body of men drawn up for battle in the deep and compact manner of the Macedonians under Philip and his successors. **Bounds**—limits.

126. Sires—fathers ; males defend the young ones while females feed them.

147-149. Trod—walk about. **State of nature**—"State of nature" was a very common and favourite subject with the people of the eighteenth century. Roussean tried to prove that man had not actually benefitted from his rise to a state of civilisation. Barbarism was much better because in that state, people lived close to nature. But the eighteenth century showed a spirit of compromise. It suggested that even in the town life people should try to live as close to nature as possible ; it should discard all artificialities. Eighteenth Century people thought nature to be the reflection of God. Hence natural life was nothing short of divine life to them. **Self love and social at her birth began**—both self-love and love of society began at the birth of nature.

152-160. Joint tenant of the shade—before the light of civilization dawned, man and breasts lived together happily in the forest as friends. **No murder clothed him, and no murder fed**—he did not kill any animal for covering his body with its skin, nor did he kill any animal and feed on its flesh. **In the same temple etc.**—men and beasts loved and prayed in the same temple, *i.e.*, the forest, and the forest echoed with their joint prayers in diverse tones. They looked upon God with equal eyes ; and God also looked on them with one eye. **Gore unstained**—without any spot of blood. **Attribute**—main quality. **Prerogative**—exclusive or special right. An important privilege. **But spare**—but mercifully and with a soft and lenient heart.

170. The duty of reason was then to act according to the

dictates of instinct. There was no conflict in life because instinct always gave man practical wisdom.

174-179. **Physic of the field**—medicine that can be had in the trees, plants and flowers. Instinct told the beasts where to find the medicines for their diseases and wounds. **Little nautilus**—reference is here perhaps to a kind of jelly fish which is furnished with a kind of skeleton consisting of two thin horny plates arranged in a manner to suggest the idea of a raft pushed by a sail. Man can easily learn the art of propelling or sailing in water by observing this kind of fish. **Here too all forms**—in respect of the art of leading life, also, we may find co-operation among men and beasts of all kinds. Men may learn different arts from beasts that develop them instinctively.

181-186. **Subterranean** — under the ground. **Town aerial**—nests of birds built on trees and the waving branches of trees present an appearance like a town. **Policies**—politics ; states of small shape. **Anarchy**—absence of any government or controlling power ; things are placed in such a nice order that no government or control from above is necessary.

193-195. **And right, too rigid**—even if things are right, if they are enforced with over-strictness, they must lead to destruction. There is a Latin proverb to that effect which means : "Over insistence on strictly legal rights sometimes leads to a positive moral wrong". **Sway**—rule.

203-204. **Ruddier burdens bend**—overladen with fruits which are red on account of being ripe. **Rills**—small mountain rivulets. **Descend**—come down the hill-side.

205-8. **What war... ...law**—states come into existence according to the needs of the times. War at that time was looked down upon as a total destruction. Enemies were turned into friends. Men from distances were attached towards each other by natural love and easy give-and-take. There was no artificial or man-made obstacle placed on love ; it was free. There were no man-made laws in existence ; the only laws that existed were those of nature. In common interest of mutual safety, small states came together and formed a bigger one.

213-218. **Sire**—father ; fathers were obeyed by sons out of love and respect and necessity. **A prince......made**— king was always looked upon as the father of the people, because he

looked after their welfare with the same affection as that of a father. **Patriarch sate**—father or leader of a group sat. **Second providence**—almost as powerful and loving as God himself. **Their law his eye**—whatever he hinted with the eye was looked upon as a law to be obeyed without hesitation. **Oracle his tongue**—whatever was uttered by him became an inviolable law with them.

221-224. Abyss profound—lowest depths of the earth ; the innermost stratum of the earth. **Whom they......man**—all these birds and beasts when they came down on earth and stood face to face with man, they became extremely sorry to find that the being whom they worshipped so respectfully as a god was nothing more than a human being with common failings, desires and passions.

231. Ere—before. **Wit oblique......light**—rays of light were broken by a passion. However much men may amuse themselves, admire or adore the mind, "it is certain that, like an irregular glass, it alters the rays of things by its figure and different intersections".

236. Right divine in men—nature was not a follower of the theory of Divine Right of Kings. So that it was not that man snould always continue to rule unobstructed over other animals of the universe.

242. Many made for one—"At first, all was permitted into their discretion which were to rule, till they saw that to live by one man's will became the cause of all men's misery". So the necessity of law arose.

245. Force first made conquest—violence of strong subdued the weaker ones, and they had to submit to the strong out of fear. This was the principle followed in the beginning. **And that conquest, law**—the most powerful man made laws for the weaker ones to obey.

260. "And such as tyrants would believe in, because they are formed like tyrants."

264-265. Reeked with gore—covered with blood. **Flamen**—priest attached to the worship of a particular god. The main duty of the 'flamen' was to keep the sacrifice burning brightly. **Loving food**—sacrificed living animals and tasted their

flesh. Pope believes that the sacrifices to gods made during very early days had no trace of blood in them. Generally, fruits and vegetables were offered for sacrifice at the altar of gods as symbols of their vices, weaknesses or lapses. Later, of course, sacrifices became bloody. Animals began to be offered for sacrifice to gods.

287-288. Relumed—rekindled. **Yet his shadow drew**—being before them the picture of God in outline.

298. Not invade—does not intrude or trespass on other's province.

305. For modes of faith—for form of worship to God. **Graceless zealots**—orthodox people who have no idea of decency. Pope was believed to be a follower of orthodox religion. This remark of his shows considerable amount of literality in ideas.

306. His Can't be wrong whose life is in the right—whatever his mode of worship, he cannot be condemned by any body who follows his conscience in life. His religion is correct.

"I prefer a bad action to a bad principle," says Roussean. A bad action can easily be set right next time—as soon as the person realises his mistake. But if the principle underlying that action is wrong, he will commit that blunder again and again.

'A bad action, moreover, remains isolated ; a bad principle is always prolific, for, after all, it is the mind that governs, and man acts according to his thoughts much oftener than he himself imagines.

308-309. Charity — living for others : selfless existence. **Thwart**—come in between ; create an obstacle.

312. The strength he gains etc.—man gains strength in life not by remaining isolated, but by befriending others, uniting with others, and making others his own. Strength lies in unity.

313-14. On their own axis etc.—man goes on living his own life as usual, but side by side with his own life, he must have a sympathetic concern about the lives of others , he must live for others too. The planets in the sky move on their own axis ; but side by side with their own movement, they have

another wider movement in life—that is revolving round the Sun.

315-6. In the similar manner, human soul too, has got two consistent movements. One movement relates to itself—and the other—and a wider one relates to the entire universe.

317-8. It is in this way that God and Nature are harmoniously joined together. Man is of course to love himself, but that love for self is to broaden gradually to include the whole of the universe.

NOTES

EPISTLE IV

In this epistle Pope deals with man in relation to Happiness. People have a false idea of happiness. That is why most of them do not attain it. Happiness is the end of all life, and it is attainable by all. God is impartial. He wants that all men should be equally happy. Therefore, he gives general happiness. Happiness does not consist in attaining worldly things. General happiness is governed by Hope and Fear.

Natural calamities are mistaken as unhappiness. They are general—and not individual. After all general laws of nature cannot be changed to suit the convenience of individual. Man wrongly thinks it is possible ; hence they find fault with God's order and feel unhappy.

Worldly goods destroy virtue very often, and hence they are detrimental to happiness. Virtue that is universal—can make man happy. Man's duty is to resign himself wholeheartedly to the search of virtue—and happiness will come to him by itself—unsought for.

1-3. Our being's end and aim—the ultimate object of every man is to attain happiness. **Still**—ever, always. That something always prompts us to sigh. **For which we bear to live, or dare to die**—it is for the attainment of happiness that we struggle on in life and pass through untold difficulties ; it is for happiness that we go forward into the jaws of death. **Dare to die**—we try to achieve martyrdom in the hope of eternal happiness. **Overlooked**—"something over-looked and sometimes magnified in imagination both by the fool and the wise." **Plant**—Pope personified 'Happiness' in the beginning, and started the Epistle with an apostrophe to Happiness. But now he looks upon happiness exactly like a plant, and connects the idea with vegetables. Then, again, Pope returns to the idea of personifying 'happiness'.

8-10. Mortal soil—on which part of the world ; where among human beings. **Propitious**—pleasing. Are the courtiers

happy ? Are they **really** healthy ? **Flaming mine**—Pope imagines diamond mines burning bright with the splendour of diamonds.

11-12. Parnassian laurels—glories attained in the field of literature. Parnassus is believed to be the dwelling place of the muses. **Iron harvests**—military glory ; bravery shown on the battlefields.

18. Are kings always happy ? No. It may at times be found with the starving beggars. Bolingbroke, in spite of his greatness was never happy. He always suffered from rancour, spite, and the pinches of disappointed ambition. Perhaps Pope had in his mind the case of Bolingbroke.

19. Blind—the learned men differ in their views of happiness, and the ways of attaining it.

20. As lovers of mankind—or as *sadhus* giving up the world altogether.

21-26. There are diverse ideas of happiness. **Happiness in action**—Epicureans. **In ease**—Stoics. Here Pope is not correct about the philosophy of the Epicureans and the Stoics. He has only taken a superficial view. **In pain**—Epicurians. **Virtue vain**—Stoics. **Doubt of all**—sceptics.

28. Happiness is Happiness—"the stoics and sceptics placed the supreme good in unconditional virtue, and the Epicureans taught the precise doctrine of Pope himself, that Pleasure is the goal, and virtue the road" (*Elwin*). Happiness cannot be defined adequately.

29-30. Mad opinion—fashion or fancied happiness, conventional idea of being happy. **All states can reach it**—happiness is attainable under all circumstances. **All Heads conceive**—it is possible for every body to form an idea of happiness to himself, though no definition of happiness can really be considered to be adequate.

31-34. Her goods—nature's blessings. **In no extreme they dwell**—nature being impartial, she does not give her blessings to any body in super-abundance. **Common sense**—natural intelligence possessed by human beings. It is an internal sense which is the common bond or centre of the five senses. In other words, good, sound practical sense and tact to deal with the everyday affair of life. It is the faculty to discern one thing from another, and the ordinary ability to keep our-

selves from being imposed upon by gross contradictions, inconsistencies and imposture.

40. But some way leans etc.—happiness of man is interdependent. While conversing with another, one has to lean towards him and hear him talk. In the same way, happiness also has to be attained by leaning towards others—with the help and cooperation of others.

42. Caverned—shut up for meditation in a cave. Even a hermit, cut off from the world, shut up in a cave, is not satisfied with his own doing. He seeks the approval and admiration of others.

52-57. Shocks—goes against ; common sense of man is shaken violently. **Condition, circumstance**—rank in society, possession of worldly wealth.

63. But fortunes gifts etc.—if all men had the same gifts from Fortune, they will surely quarrel among themselves. So there will be discord all along, and no harmony in the world.

66. Externals—outward or worldly possessions. God did not want man to be happy with worldly possessions alone.

70. While those are placed in hope, and these in fear—the poor people feel happy in expectation of being rich in future ; so they feel joy in hope. The rich are afraid lest they should lose their wealth and become poor. So they suffer from fear.

72. Men are happy or unhappy according to the picture they are able to draw of their future life.

73-76. Attempt ye still to rise........they raise—Pope had in his mind the description of Homer of the futile and rash attempts of the giants to reach Heaven. In their war against gods, giants tried to scale heavens by heaping Ossa upon Pelion, and Olympus upon Ossa. As a result of their rash attempts, the whole thing tumbled down, and the giants were destroyed.

78-84. Mere mankind—to men simply as men. **Temperance**—self control in respect of food and drink and other indulgences. **Peace is all thy own**—peace can be given by virtue alone. **These**—the bad ; the latter. **Worse**—by worse means.

92-100. Want—do without. **Pass for good**—appear as good. **Who fancy**—those who imagine. **bliss to vice**—assigned. Those who consider vice something enjoyable and virtue something miserable. **But fools etc.**—the fool alone calls the good unhappy, when an accident happens to a good man. The fool does not know that the accident might have happened to any man good or bad. Accident is something unforeseen. **Falkland**—he was a very important member of the Long Parliament. He was a true patriot and a real well-wisher of the country. In the beginning, he was in favour of the reforms. But when war broke out, he took up arms on behalf of the king, but was very unhappy because of the outbreak of the civil war. It pained him very much. He did his best for peace. He was killed at the first battle of Newbury. He was then only 33. England suffered a great loss at the death of such a noble man. Death did not spare such a noble soul as Falkland. **Turenne**—he was a great French general who fought during the Thirty Years' War. His fame rests on military achievements. He had a philosophic calmness, and his temperament was cold. He was converted to Roman Catholic religion towards the end of his life.

101-110. Sidney—Sir Philip was a poet, romancist, ambassador, critic, soldier, courtier. In fact, he was a wonderful personality in the Elizabethan age. Elizabeth called him "the jewel of her time." He was offered the crown of Poland. He died at the age of 32. **Bleeds amid the martial strife**—bleeding on the battlefield. **Lamented Digby**—refers to hon'ble Robert Digby Son of Lord Digby. He died at 40. Pope wrote an epitaph on him. All these sufferings of the virtuous are purely accidental. They can not go to prove that virtuous are meant to suffer. Lord Digby, his father, lived up to 92. **Marseilles' good Bishop**—here is another contemporary reference. Plague broke out in Marseilles in May, 1720. Good Bishop Belsunce showed great courage and devotion by looking after the sick. **When nature sickened and each gale was death ?**—when the atmosphere of Marseilles was totally vitiated and poisoned with plague germs, and each gust of wind blew death to man. **A parent**—reference is here to Pope's own mother who died in June 1733 at the age of ninety-one.

112-120. There deviates nature, and here wanders will—nature, when it deviates from its course, produces physical

evil ; when will begins to wander, it produces moral evil. **Or partial ill is universal good**—that which is evil to a part is for the good of the whole, or perhaps change admits evil —perhaps nature permits it to occur. But the last thing seldom occurred until man interfered. **Righteous Abel was...... etc.**—refers to the fight between the two sons of Adam in which noble-souled Abel was killed by his wicked brother Cain. **Dire**—cruel. **Dire disease**—disease is inherited from his vicious father.

121-130. The Eternal Cause—supreme God. **Prone for his favourites**—inclined to keep or side with His favourites. It is a wrong idea. **Burning Aetna**—A burning volcano near Vesuvius in Italy. **If a sage requires**—if a really good man desires it. No object of nature can forget its duty or give up, following its principle even when good men desire it. **Blameless Bethel**—innocent Hugh Bethel a Yorkshire country gentleman, and a friend of Pope. He suffered terribly from Asthma. Pope means that laws of nature cannot be changed for anybody. The highest of men may desire it—but to no avail. **Chartres' head**—Colonel Francis Chartres was notorious for all conceivable kinds of vices, He had died three years earlier.

137-141. Calvin—famous reformer of the times (1509-64). **Edify**—give knowledge. Systems are all relative. What is very good for one may not be equally good for the other.

144. What rewards your virtue, punish mine—one particular system proves good for you, proves just the opposite to me. You are rewarded for doing a particular deed under particular set of circumstances. But I do the same thing under different circumstances, I am punished instead of being rewarded.

145. Whatever is, is right—but whatever system, it is absolutely correct and upright. You can never find fault with its fine balance, nor can you ever call it whimsical or partial.

146. Caesar—Julius Caesar. **Titus**—was one of the very good and noble emperors of Rome. He was a good fighter, and made a name for himself in the famous seige of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He succeeded his father to the throne, and governed very well. He never shed blood over private grudge and was always prepared to pardon his enemies. He was God-fear-

ing and religious-minded. He did his best to ensure the welfare of his subjects. For his good deeds, noble heart and charitable disposition, he was called the "delight of human race". This world, says Pope, was made for the ambitious, selfish, driving and oppressive personalities like Julius Caesar ; but in this world, noble, brave, charitable and god-fearing kings like Titus, too, have an equally good place.

147-150. Who chained his country—Julius Caesar. **He whose virtue sighed etc.**—it is said that Titus sighed in grief, and considered the day totally lost, if he could not do good to somebody or bring some relief to somebody on that day. **But sometimes virtue starves**—but the reverse also is possible in the world order. Sometimes virtuous men are found miserable ; and vicious men are found prosperous in the world. **Is the reward of virtue bread ?**—the reward of virtue is not to be counted in loaves and fishes—or worldly gain.

151-154. That—bread. **Knave**—villain ; wicked man, a man of vice. **Dives for gain**—the pearl-diver may be a man of vice, but he must reap some worldly profits because he takes the risk of going down into the depth of the sea.

161-163. External for internal—rewards in terms of worldly riches given for internal qualities, that is, inner gifts. **Who ask etc.**—those who put such questions will never understand that God has given to man plenty of things, and He has many more things still to give.

168-170. Soul's calm sun-shine—equanimity of the mind and contented calmness of the heart. **Then give humility a coach and six**—if you want to reward virtue better, give to a humble and really modest man a coach driven by six horses—which is a sign of elevated life.

1711-78. Gown—Academic gown of a university or a preacher's gown. **Its great cure, a crown**—the remark is sarcastic. It is directed against George II who quarrelled with his father when Prince of Wales, and joined hands with the opposition. But as soon as he came to the throne, he changed his views, gave up the opposition party and patronised the ministers appointed by his father. **Trash**—useless ; worthless. **Boy and man**—boy who in course of time grows into manhood. **Apples or cakes**—tasteful things of life. **Like the Indian**—refers to the North American Indians. **Thy dog, thy bottle**

etc.—trifling things which a man generally considers necessary in life.

185. What kind of persons can attain worldly name, comforts and pleasures ? It is only the good and the just.

186-7. Judges and senators have been bribed, and made to do unjust deeds ; but Love and Respect have never been bought or sold for money.

192. **Wants**—does not have ; lacks. It is foolishness on the part of man to think that God does not love a really able man, who loves his brethren and are always eager to serve mankind, only because he does not have enough money. God loves the good and the virtuous, whatever their worldly state.

193-194. Whether a man should get fame in life or be infamous does not depend on his worldly or financial status. It depends entirely on his actions. Those who perform their duties nobly, charitably and sincerely must get appreciation and honour irrespective of whether they are rich or poor. It is the virtuous deed alone that attract honour and name for a man. This couplet of Pope is a very well known one and is often quoted in daily life. **There**—in doing one's duty sincerely and well.

196-199. **Flaunts in rags.........brocade**—the poor man goes about in torn clothes, whereas the rich man shows off their costly and ornamental dress. **Cowl**—garment (hood and cloak) worn by monks covering the head and shoulders. The word is pronounced '*cool*'.

201-209. **Acts the monk**—reference is here to Philip V of Spain who resigned the throne to his son and became a monk. But his son died very shortly after it, and Philips had to come back to the throne once again. **Worth makes the man...fellow**—it is the inner worth of a man that makes him worthy of the name. If he does not have the inner worth, he is not fit to be called a man in spite of his high title or artificial trappings. He becomes a common man or a 'fellow'. **Prunella**—it is a kind of stuff of which the clergymen's gowns are made. **Strings**—ribbons of various orders. **Whores**—women of ill fame. Reference here is to the influence that the mistress of George I and George II cast upon the administration of the country. **Lucrece**—refers to Lucretia, wife of Tarquinias, who in spite of the rape, was considered a virtuous woman. **By your father's worth etc.**—if you judge your greatness by the great-

ness of your father—and not by your own good, noble and virtuous deeds or inner worth of yours.

211-220. Ignoble blood—low birth. **Crept through**—flown unnoticed through the veins. **Since the flood**—ever since the world began. **Sots**—drunkards. **Howards**—a noble English family headed by the Duke of Norfolk. **Where, but etc.**—greatness lies no where except in heroism and wisdom. **Macdonia's madman**—Alexander the great. **Swede**—Charles XII

224-226. Further than his nose—immediate future. There is a tendency in everybody to look forward. But people gnerally are so narrow in their outlook that they cannot look beyond immediate future. Their vision is very limited. **No less alike**—the politic are like each other, just as much as the heroes are the same. **Sly slow**—shrewd and slow-moving. **Circumspective eyes**—eyes that can look round and observe very carefully.

235. Aurelius—Marcus Aurelius Antonius Pius (2nd century A.D.) was the noblest and the greatest of all Roman Emperors. Reign nobly like Aurelius. **Bleed like Socrates**—die like Socrates. But the word is wrongly used. Socrates did not bleed to death. He died by drinking hemlock.

240. My lord—refers to Bolingbroke. **Tully**—Tullius Cicero.

244. Eugene—Italian by origin, but born and educated in France. By profession he was an Austrian General. He fought on behalf of Louis IV. He shared with the Duke of Marlborough the glory of the victory of Blenheim. After the War of Spanish Succession, he won fresh glory by beating the Turks.

246. Rubicon—a river in between Cisalpine Gaul and Italy. **Rhine**—a river in Germany.

247. A wit 's a feather, and a chief a rod—there are two interpretations offered of the line :

(1) "Wise men are light as feathers, a chief is a scourge of his kind". – Elwin

(2) "A wit is his own quill pen, a chief is merely a field-marshal's baton" Perhaps the second one is more suitable.

251-52. When what to etc.—when that which ought to have been completely forgotton is raised high to mislead half

the people of the world. Reference here may be to the humiliating treatment meted out to the bodies of Cromwell and other regicides after the Restoration.

253. **But of true desert**—got strictly according to merit.

255-257. **One self approving hour etc.**—one really glorious hour of life is equal to the whole life of inactivity or dull routine living. **Huzzas**—praises. **Marcellus**—was a friend of Cicero. He was on Pompey's side opposite to Julius Caesar. After the battle of Pharsalia which Caesar won, Marcellus voluntarily retired to exile. There is political allegory in the line. Pope meant by Marcellus the Duke of Ormond, and by Caesar he meant Sir Robert Walpole. Pope and his friend Bolingbroke had deep sympathy for Ormond in exile.

259-260. **Parts**—qualities ; abilities. **You**—Bolingbroke, a great friend of Pope. **What is it to be wise etc.**—wisdom means nothing more than the cruel fact that the real mystery of the universe cannot be known or solved. Most of the things on earth are unknowable. Knowledge enables us to see through the weaknesses of all others beside those of our own.

263-267. **Drudge**—continue painfully. **Without a second, or without a judge**—none to support—none to appreciate the merit of your efforts. **Painful pre-eminance**—fame or importance in life sometimes causes suffering in life. This phrase has been quoted from Addison.

277-280. **To sigh for ribbons if thou art so silly**—if you are foolish enough to try tooth and nail for any insignia of honour or ribbons. **Lord Umbra**—Lord Shadow—*i.e.*, some unsubstantial person of hollow merits. **Sir Billy**—this perhaps refers to William Yonge whom Pope so often attacks in his satires and invectives. He was made Knight of the Bath. He was a man "whose fluency and readiness of speech amounted to a fault." **Gripus**--this refers to the Duke of Marlborough who had died 12 years ago. He was notorious for his greed. **Gripus' wife**—Duchess of Marlborough who, too, was an object of Pope's ridicule. It is said, Pope accepted money from the Duchess to suppress the passage about herself.

281-284. **Bacon**—Francis Bacon, the Essayist (1560-1626). Pope calls him the "meanest", inspite of his brilliance of mind and wisdom, because of his treatment of Essex, and because of his venality. He received presents from suitors. **If parts allure**

thee—if qualities charm you. **Ravished with the whistling of a name**—if you are overwhelmed by the high sounding name of a famous man. **Cromwell**—Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England for some years after the Civil War. As a Roman Catholic, Pope naturally had a hostile opinion against Cromwell.

291-2. Mark by what......Venice rose—remember how road to greatness lies thro' so many dark alleys and lanes—misdeeds, vices, corruptions ; the city of Venice which stands so splendid today was built of dirt and filth and sea-weed of the meanest kind. Strangely enough, Pope here sneers at the humble beginning of the city of Venice. It is difficult to account for this remark.

294. And all that raised the hero sunk the man—evil deeds, corrupt practices prompted by limitless ambition, may lead a man to worldly greatness ; but along side of this ill-gotten greatness the human being in him gets smaller and smaller.

296. Stained with blood, or ill exchanged for gold—European countries achieved greatness either at the cost of a large number of human lives—or it was bought for money. Both these methods are equally condemnable.

300-304. Sanctified—made sacred. **Minion**—meanflatterer. **Imperious**—haughty or domineering. **Trophied arches**—arches covered with memorials of victory on the battlefield. **Storied halls**—halls in which are hung tapestry or pictures telling stories of various victories achieved. **Haunt their slumbers...... ...shade**—disturb their sleep in the gorgeous shades of trees.

301-314. below—on earth. **Stand still**—the idea is of a big sphere which moves fast on its axis—but the axis itself is fixed. It keeps still throughout. **Is blest in what etc.**—like mercy, it is twice blest , it blesses one who gives and also one who receives.

319-323. The broadest mirth—rough and low kind of mirth which lowers humanity in man. **Elated**—over-joyed.

330. The bad, the good—the wicked men and noblemen.

339. Finds out the main source of all human knowledge—and the main end where they meet—faith, law, morals, human

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